Montgomery

For the benefit of the Red Cross Fund

Recollections of Calcutta for over half a century

CHECKED

By MONTAGUE MASSEY

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS

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DEDICATED

TO

THE LADY CARMICHAEL

THE FOUNDER OF

THE BENGAL WOMEN'S WAR FUND

INTRODUCTION.

I THINK it would be advisable for me to state at the outset that these reminiscences are entirely devoid of sensational elements, in order to prevent any possible disappointment and remove from the minds of those, and I know several, who have conceived the idea that I am about to disclose matters that, as far as I am concerned, must for ever lie buried in the past. There are certain startling incidents still fresh in my memory that I could relate, but they would be out of place in a work of this nature. A considerable amount of the subject-matter contained herein is devoted to a descriptive account of the wonderful transformation that has overtaken the city since my first arrival in the sixties, and to the many and varied structural improvements and additions that have been, and are still being, made in streets and buildings, both public and private. The origin and conception of this little work is due to the inspiration of my friend Walter Exley of the *Statesman* staff. I had often before been approached by friends and others on the subject of writing and publishing what I could tell of Calcutta of the olden days, but I had always felt some diffidence in doing so partly because

I thought it might not prove sufficiently interesting. But when Mr. Exley appeared on the scene last July, introduced to me by a mutual friend, matters seemed somehow to assume a different aspect. In the first place I felt that I was talking to a man of considerable knowledge and experience in journalistic affairs, and one whose opinion was worth listening to, and it was in consequence of what he told me that for the first time I seriously contemplated putting into effect what I had so frequently hesitated to do in the past. He assured me I was mistaken in the view I had held, and that what I could relate would make attractive reading to the present generation of Europeans, not only in the city, but also in the mofussil. I finally yielded to persuasion, and throwing back my memory over the years tried to conjure up visions of Calcutta of the past. A good deal in the earlier part refers to a period which few, if any, Europeans at present in this country know of except through the medium of books. The three articles published in the columns of the *Statesman* of the 22nd and 29th July and 5th August were the first outcome of our conversation. I then left Calcutta for a tour up-country as stated on page 28, and the work was temporarily suspended. It was not until the early part of September, when I had settled down for a season at Naini Tal, that I

resumed the threads of my narrative. It was at first my intention to continue publishing a series of short articles in the columns of the *Statesman*, but as I proceeded it gradually dawned upon my mind that I could achieve a twofold object by compiling my recollections in book form in aid of the Red Cross Fund. Whether it was due to this new and additional incentive which may perhaps have had the effect of stimulating my mental powers I know not, but as I continued to write on, scenes and events long since forgotten seemed gradually to well up out of the dim and far distant past and visualize on the tablets of my memory. I was thus enabled to extend and develop the scope of the work beyond the limit I had originally contemplated. My one and ardent hope now is that the book may prove a financial success for the benefit of the funds of the Society on whose behalf it is published. That some who perhaps might not care to take a copy simply for its own sake will not hesitate to do so and thus assist by his or her own personal action in however small a degree in carrying on the good and noble work which must awaken in our hearts all the best and finest instincts of our nature, as well as our warmest and deepest sympathies.

I have to express my great thanks to Lady Carmichael for her kindness and courtesy in

having graciously accorded me permission to dedicate the work to her on behalf of the Red Cross Fund

My thanks are also due to my friend P. Tennyson Cole, the eminent portrait painter, who did me the honour of painting my portrait for the book at considerable sacrifice of his very valuable time. Unfortunately, however, it was found impossible to make use of the portrait, as the time at our disposal was too short to permit of its reproduction.

I am deeply indebted to the Honourable Maharajadhiraj Bahadur of Burdwan who kindly placed at my disposal a collection of priceless and invaluable old views of Calcutta which are now quite unobtainable and for having had copies printed off from the negatives and for granting me permission to reproduce them in my book.

I have also to thank my friend Harold Sudlow for designing the sketch on the outer covering, which I think considerably enhances the appearance of the book. I must further acknowledge my indebtedness to Mr J. Zorab, Superintending Engineer, Presidency Circle, P. W. D., who refreshed my memory as to certain details in the alteration of some of the public buildings, while furnishing me with information as to some others, with which I had not been previously acquainted. Last of all,

though by no means the least, my special thanks are due to my friend C. F. Hooper, of Thacker, Spink & Co., who has rendered me invaluable assistance in the compilation of the book, and without whom many more defects would have been apparent. I shall for ever appreciate the valuable time he expended and the amount of trouble he took, which I know he could ill afford owing to the very busy life he leads.

BENGAL CLUB:
April, 1918.

M. M.

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Photo. by] **Old view of Government House, North aspect** *[Calcutta Phototype Co*

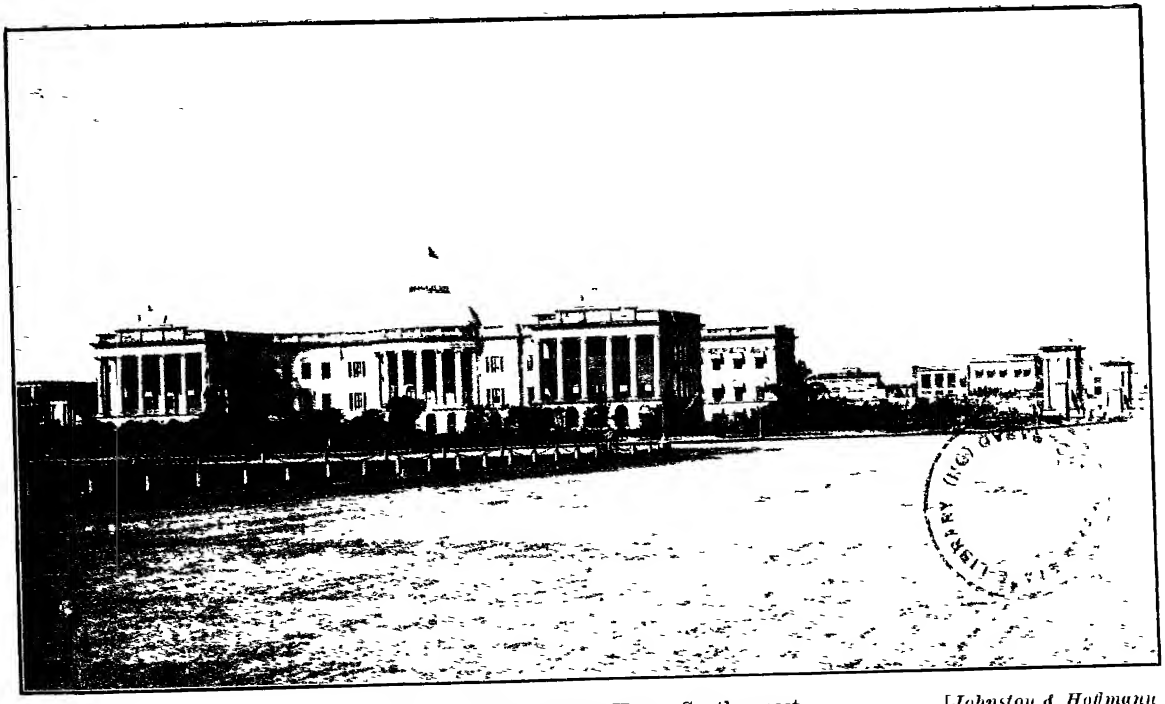


Photo by] Old view of Government House, South aspect [*Johnston & Hoffmann*

Recollections of

Old Calcutta

PART I.

Personal.

WHEN I first came to Calcutta things were entirely different to the present day. There was, of course, a very much smaller European population, and every one was consequently pretty well known to every one else, but at the same time the cleavage between the different sections of society was much more marked than it is now. Members of the Civil Service were very exclusive, holding themselves much more aloof than the "heaven-born" do to-day; the military formed another distinct set; while the mercantile people, lawyers, barristers, and others not in any government service, had their own particular circle. This marked cleavage did not, however, prevent the different "sets" from having quite a good time, and as I have said, even if they did not mix together very closely and intimately, we all in a way knew each other.

Forty or fifty years ago, Calcutta was not so lively as it is to-day, especially in the cold weather, but there was one thing in those days which we do not see now. I refer to the regal pomp and circumstance which characterised Government House, and all the functions held there. The annual State Ball was an event which was always looked forward to, and it was a ball at which one could comfortably dance, instead of the crush it had become in the decade prior to 1911.

The "Palki."

Looking back, one of the first things that strikes me is the change between then and now in the matter of locomotion. In my early days there were no taxi-cabs, trams, nor even *fitton-gharries*, the only conveyances for those who had not private carriages being *palkis* and *bund-gharries*. It would seem strange to-day to see Europeans being carried about the streets in *palkis*, but half a century or more ago they were by no means despised, especially by the newly-out *chokras*, whose salary was not at all too high. They had to choose between a *palki* and a *ticca-gharry*, which were very much alike in shape, the difference between them being that the one was carried on the shoulders of coolies, and the other drawn by a horse. The private conveyances of those days were as a rule quite

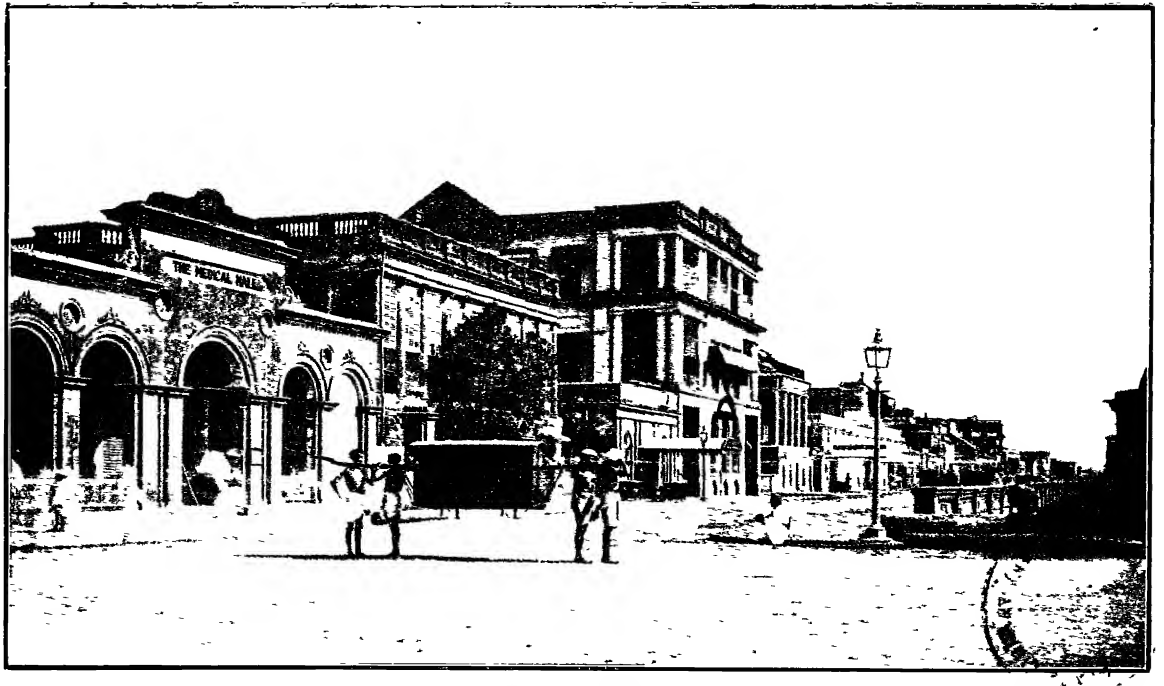


Photo. by] Old view of Esplanade, East, showing Scott Thomson's corner [*Johnston & Hoffmann.*

Photo by] Old River view, showing sailing ships *[Johnston & Hoffmann.*

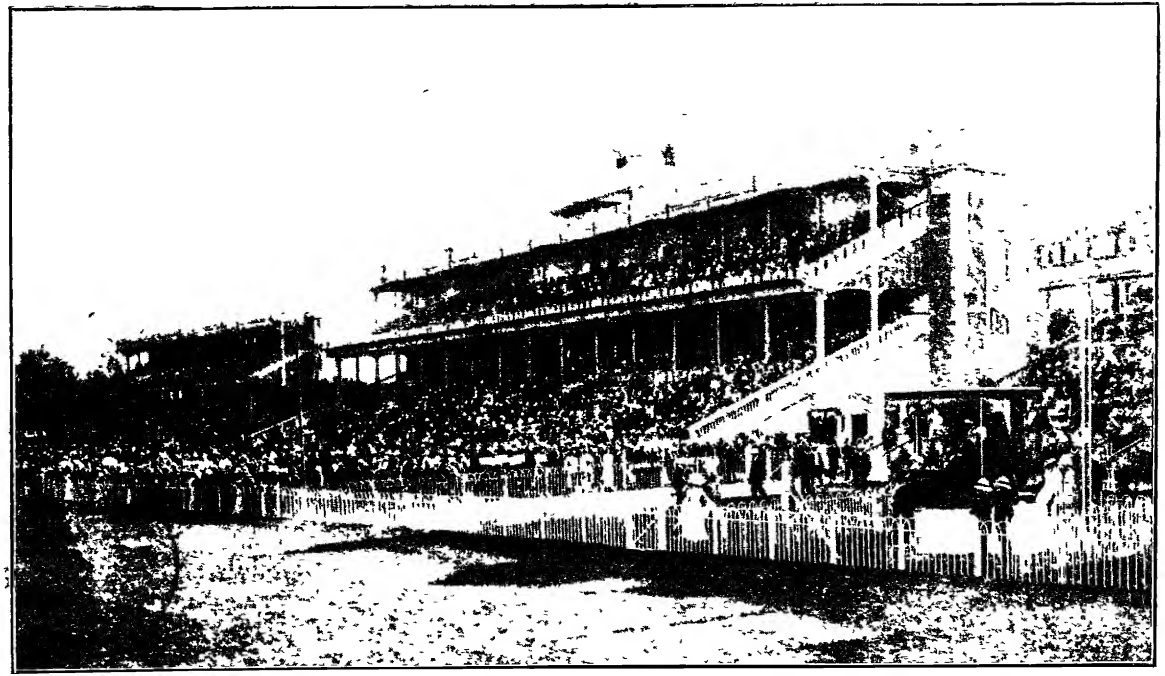


Photo by] Royal Calcutta Turf Club's Race Stands: Viceroy's Cup Day. *[Johnston & Hoffmann*

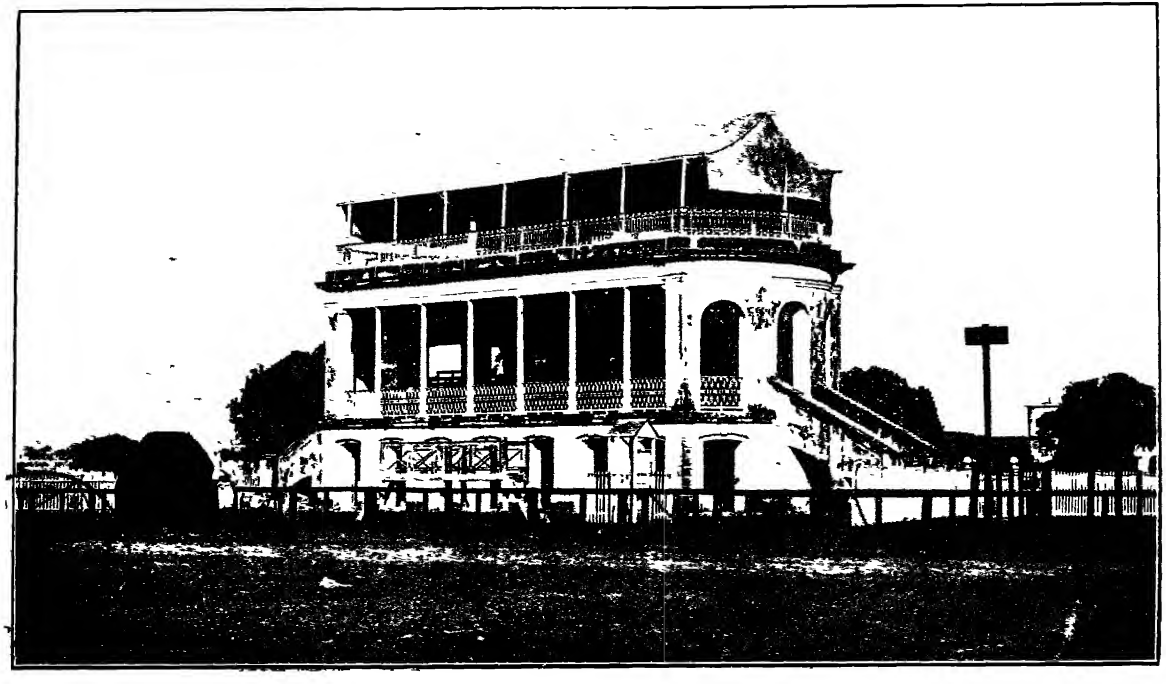


Photo. by] The Old Race Stands [*Johnston & Hoffmann,*

elaborate affairs, and it used to be one of the sights of the evening to go on "the course," which embraced the Strand and the Red Road, to see the richer inhabitants of the city taking their evening drive. Later, however, the *haut ton*, evidently thinking the Strand was getting too plebeian, confined their evening drive to a place in the stately procession up and down the Red Road, which thus became "the course."

Early-morning Racing.

That term must not be taken in its modern sense, however. If one spoke about "the course" to-day, it would be understood to mean the racecourse, but in those days it meant the venue of the evening drive. There was then, as now, a racecourse in Calcutta, but, though on the present site, it was, as might be expected, nothing like so elaborate. There was only one stand, and that was opposite the old jail; there was no totalisator and no book-makers. The Racing took place in the early morning, from about 7 o'clock till 9 or 9-30. The only public form of gambling on the race-course then were the lotteries, which were held the night before at the race-stand, and they were quite big ones, numbers of them on each race. In addition, there was, of course, plenty of private wagering between one man and another. Very often in the cold weather

racing would be held up by dense fogs so that for a time it was difficult to see across the breadth of the course, the consequence being that we were on those mornings late for office. Even in those far-off days professional jockeys were employed, but principally in the cold weather. The riding at the monsoon meetings was mostly confined to G. R.'s.

Social and Other Clubs.

Of other sport there was not much. There was no football, and no tennis clubs; but there were cricket clubs (Calcutta and Ballygunge), and the Golf Club, which had the course and a tent on the site of the present pavilion on the maidan, but there were few members and they used to spend their time sipping pegs and chatting more often than playing golf. Of course, there was polo for those who could afford it, but there was no Tollygunge Club, no Royal Calcutta Golf Club, and no Jodhpore Club.

As regards social clubs, there was the Bengal, which was then very much more exclusive than now, and into which it was difficult to obtain an entrance unless you had been a long time in the city and had a certain standing. The old *Qui Hais* who were members looked askance at young men. There was also the United Service Club which was at first

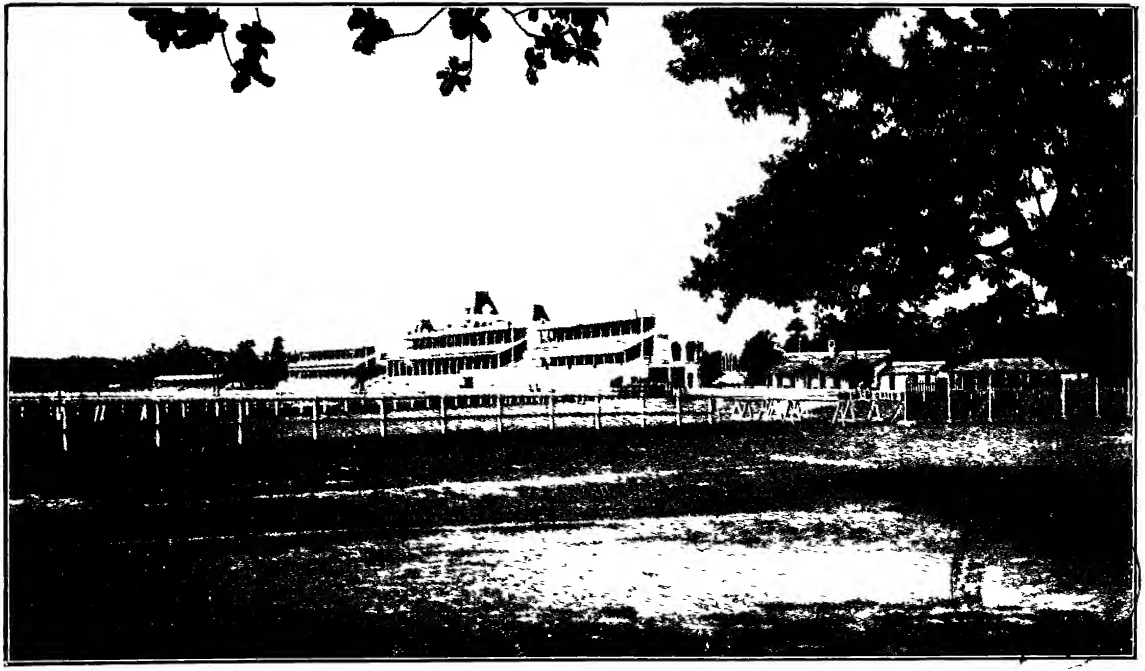
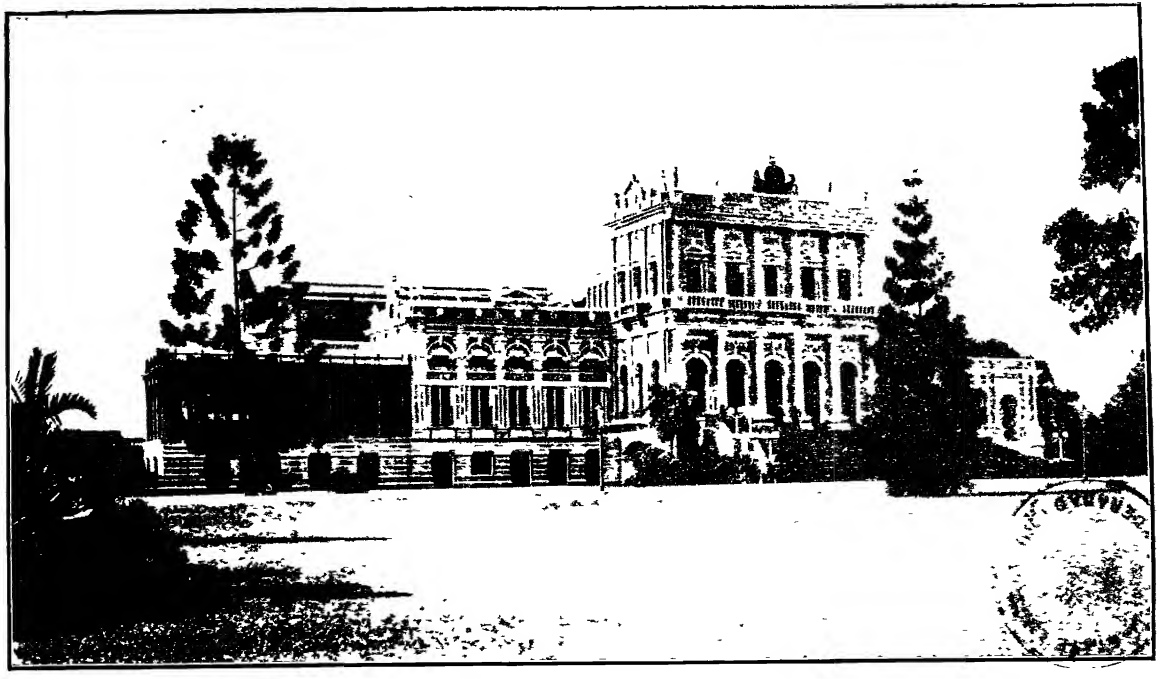


Photo by] **Distant view of Race Stands** *Bourne & Shepherd.*



Belvedere

confined strictly to I. C. S. men and military officers, but subsequently financial considerations led to its being thrown open to members of other services.

Theatricals without Actresses.

In those days, there was no Saturday Club, and we were dependent for our dancing on the assembly balls and private dances; the former used to be held at the Town Hall about once a fortnight. All people of any respectability were eligible to attend, and very pleasant, indeed, these assembly balls were. We used also to have concerts mainly given by amateurs, occasionally assisted by professionals, but there were no professional theatricals. The demand for this kind of entertainment was filled by the Calcutta Amateur Theatrical Society, which used to give about six productions during the cold weather season. People who flock to the theatres nowadays, especially in the cold weather, and see companies with full choruses will probably be surprised to hear that in our amateur performances there were no actresses. All the ladies' parts were taken by young boys, and I remember well in my younger days dressing up as a girl. I used to take the rôle of the leading lady, and I remember two of our most successful efforts were "London Assurance" and scenes from "Twelfth Night,"

in the former of which I took the part of Lady Gay Spanker and Viola in the latter.

At first our performances were given on the ground floor of where the Saturday Club now is, but after a time this was not found satisfactory. Then one of our most enthusiastic members, "Jimmy" Brown, who was a partner in a firm of jewellers, carried through a scheme for building a theatre of our own, and this was erected in Circular Road at the corner of Hungerford Street. Here we carried on until in the great cyclone of 1864 the roof was blown off and the building seriously damaged. We had, therefore, to move again, and went to where Peliti's is now, which was then occupied as a shop. After one season there, we were temporarily located in a theatre built in the old Tivoli Gardens, opposite La Martinière.

The "CATS," as we used to be designated, was a very old institution, and had been in existence some time before I joined up. They were very ably and energetically managed by Mr. G. H. Cable, assisted by Mrs. Cable, the father and mother of the present Sir Ernest Cable. They were affectionately and familiarly known among us all as the "Old Party and the Mem Sahib." He used to cast all the characters and coach us up in our parts, attend rehearsals, and on the nights of the performance was always on the spot to give us confidence and

encouragement when we went on the stage, while Mrs. Cable was invaluable, more particularly to the "ladies" of the company. She chose the material for the gowns, designed the style and cut, tried them on, and saw that we were properly and immaculately turned out to the smallest detail. On performance nights I never had any thing before going on, and assisted by the aid of tight lacing I could generally manage to squeeze my waist within the compass of 24 inches. I recollect one evening when I was rather more than usually tightened up, I had in the course of the piece to sit on a couch that was particularly low-seated. I did not notice this for the moment, but when I tried to rise I found myself in considerable difficulty. I made several unsuccessful efforts, which the audience were only too quick to notice, and when I heard a titter running through the house, my feelings can be more easily imagined than described. However, after a last despairing effort I managed to extricate myself from the difficulty and get on my feet. Ever afterwards I used carefully to inspect the couches before the performance commenced. Amongst those who were members and associated with us were E. C. Morgan and W. T. Berners, partners in the then well-known firm of Ashburner & Co., who retired from business in the year 1880. The former has been Chairman of Directors of

the Calcutta Tramway Co., I believe, ever since the company was incorporated, but I hear that he has lately vacated the position. Berners, I believe, has been living the life of a retired gentleman. I never heard that he renewed his connection with business affairs after he got home. The late Mr. Sylvester Dignam, a cousin of Mr. Cable, and latterly head partner of the firm of Orr Dignam & Co., the well-known solicitors, was also one of the troupe, and by his intimate knowledge of all matters theatrical contributed very considerably to the success of our efforts. I recollect he took the character of Dazzle in "London Assurance" and Mr. Cable that of "Lawyer Meddle," which latter was the funniest and most laughable performance I ever witnessed. We were all in fits of laughter, and could scarcely contain ourselves whenever he appeared on the stage.

"JIMMY" HUME.

Charles Brock, Willie and Donald Creaton, partners in Mackenzie Lyall & Co., who were my greatest friends, but alas! are no more, were very prominent members, and there is one more whom I must on no account forget to mention, and though he (or she) comes almost last, does not by any means rank as the least. I refer to "Jimmy" Hume, as he was then known to his confreres, but who is in the present day

our worthy and much respected Public Prosecutor, Mr. J. T. Hume. In "London Assurance" he portrayed the important part of Grace Harkaway, and a very charming and presentable young lady he made.

But I must not forget to mention that his very laudable ambition to obtain histrionic honours was at the outset very nearly nipped in the bud. He, of course, had to disclose the fact that in his earlier life he had committed a pardonable youthful indiscretion and had had both his forearms fancifully adorned in indelible blue tattoo with a representation of snakes, mermaids, and sundry. A solemn council of the senior members of the company was forthwith held, presided over by the Mem Sahib, "Old Party," and "Syl" Dignam. After a good deal of anxious thought and discussion as to how the disfigurements could be temporarily obliterated some one suggested gold-beater skin, which was finally adopted and proved eminently successful. Not one of the audience ever had the slightest suspicion that his (or her) arms were not as they should have been, and such as any ordinary young lady would not have disdained to possess.

Charlie Pittar.

One of our most enthusiastic and energetic members was the late Mr. Charles Pittar, a well-

known and much-respected solicitor of the High Court, and the father of Mrs. George Girard, the wife of our genial Collector of Income-Tax. He was on all occasions well to the front, and the services he rendered to the society on many momentous occasions were invaluable, more especially in "London Assurance," to which I have previously alluded. In fact, it is not too much to say that without him it would have been very difficult to stage the piece. As "Dolly" Spanker, my husband, he was inimitable, and brought down the house two or three times during the evening. He was also very great as "Little Toddlekins," a part that might have been specially written for him. The character is that of a stout, somewhat bulky and unwieldy young person who possesses an inordinate appreciation of her own imaginary charms. Her father, whom I might designate as a fly-by-night sort of a gentleman, a character which I once ventured to portray myself, is obsessed by the one thought of getting rid of her as quickly as possible, but all the would-be suitors the moment they set eyes on her beat a hasty retreat. There were, of course, very many more pieces that Mr. Pittar played in, but these two were the *chef d'œuvres* of his repertoire.

As I am writing, the memory of another member of the company flits across my mind, in the person of the late Mr. H. J. Place, familiarly

known as "H. J.," the founder of the well-known firm of Place, Siddons and Gough. Although he was never cast for very prominent characters, he was most useful in minor parts, and in other little ways helped the company along by his many acts of unselfish devotion.

I must now regretfully take leave of a subject which has always exercised a peculiar fascination over me, and I can truly say that those old theatrical days were amongst the very happiest of my life.

Advent of the "Prof."

A year or two later, the first professional theatrical troupe came out from Australia under the direction of Mr. and Mrs Lewis, whom probably a few people may still remember. They erected close to the Ochterlony monument a temporary wooden structure, accessible by a steep flight of steps, and played in it for a few seasons, after which Lewis built the present Theatre Royal. He brought out several companies in successive seasons, and other companies also used to come and perform between-whiles, but only in the cold weather. Hot weather entertainments were practically unknown. With the advent of professionals, the Amateur Theatrical Association went out of existence, just as the starting of the Saturday Club later, mainly through the initiative of the

Hon'ble Mr. Justice Louis Jackson, killed the assembly balls.

Then the Corinthian Theatre was built on the site of Dover's horse repository in Dhurrumtollah, and subsequently, on the site of the present Opera House, a smaller building was erected, in which an Italian Opera Company used to perform. When the late King Edward, then Prince of Wales, came out in 1875, the Italian Opera Company was playing there. The company's expenses were guaranteed before they came out, all the boxes and stalls being rented at high prices, taken for the season. During the Prince's visit, Charles Matthews and Mrs. Matthews also came out with their company and gave several performances in the city.

Earlier Business Hours.

Turning from sporting and theatrical matters to the more important topic of business, one cannot help realising the difference between then and now. Business generally used to commence earlier than it does now and many of the European houses, particularly the Greek firms, opened their offices punctually at 9 o'clock, by which time both Burra Sahibs and assistants were at their desks. I have very often passed several contracts by the time offices open nowadays. The Hatkhola Jute dealers usually began the day's work at 6 o'clock in the morning, and most of

the buying by European houses was finished by 9 o'clock. There were in those days no gunny brokers, their services not being required, as the only Jute Mill then in existence was the Borneo Company, which was afterwards converted into the Barnagore Jute Mill Company.

Another thing which will strike the present-day broker as strange is that there was no Exchange where brokers and merchants could meet together. The only place approximating to it was a room in the Bonded Warehouse, which was set apart for the purpose and called the Brokers' Exchange. There brokers of all kinds used to meet each other, have tiffin, and write their letters and contracts. The stock and share brokers transacted their business in the open air in all weathers on a plot of land where James Finlay & Co.'s offices are now, and this was usually referred to as the "Thieves' Bazaar."

The Port Canning Scheme.

Speaking of business reminds me of the great excitement created by the Port Canning Scheme over 50 years ago. The rumour was spread abroad, as it has been more than once since, that the Hooghly was silting up and Calcutta as a port was doomed. The idea, which originated with a German, was to build a port with docks and jetties and all other

conveniences at Canning Town which was then already connected with Calcutta by a railway. The Company was no sooner floated on the market than the wildest excitement ensued—people tumbled over each other in their mad desire to obtain shares at any price, and even high Government officials were known to have forwarded to the Promotor blank cheques for him to fill in the amount in the hope of being allotted original shares. The scrip changed hands at rapidly increasing prices, and it was no uncommon occurrence for shares to advance in the course of a day hundreds of rupees until they eventually reached Rs. 9,000 to Rs. 10,000, the par value being Rs. 1,000. I had one share given to me which I sold for Rs. 6,000, Of course the inevitable happened—Port Canning proved a dead failure and the slump was most disastrous, the shares rapidly declining from thousands to hundreds and even less.

Fortnightly Mails.

Of course there were no telephones in the days I am writing about, and the telegraph was very rarely used. Business had not to be done in such a rush then, and in the ordinary way the post was quick enough. Telegraph charges were high, and it was only in matters of the utmost urgency that the wires were used by business people. Then there were

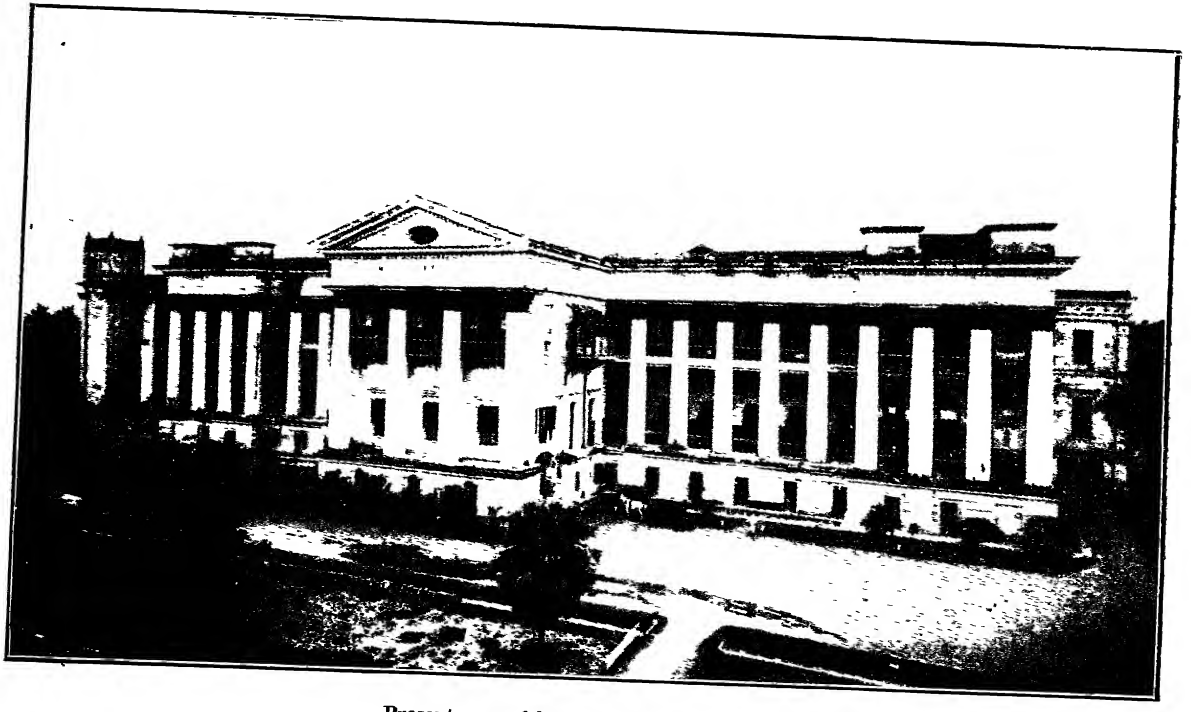
only two mails a month. One fortnight the mails were sent direct from Calcutta by the P. & O. steamer from Garden Reach, and the next fortnight went across country to Bombay. The railway line did not extend right across the country then, and in places the mails had to be taken from one railway terminus to the beginning of the next part of the line by *dâk* runners. I remember when I went home in 1869, I went by train as far as Nagpur, and from there had to go by *dâk* gharry to join the railway again at another point about 150 miles away. This was, of course, before the Suez canal was opened, and after the round-the-Cape route had ceased to be the way to India. Mails and passengers went by steamer to Suez, and then by train to Alexandria, where they joined another steamer. Similarly the incoming mail came in alternate fortnights to Bombay and Calcutta, and the arrival of the mail at Garden Reach, particularly in the cold weather when all the young ladies came out to be married, was always a great occasion. All Calcutta used to gather at the jetty at Garden Reach to see and welcome the new-comers. Practically, the only steamers then were owned by the P. & O., Apcar & Co., and Jardine Skinner & Co., the two latter trading to China; Mackinnon & Mackenzie had one or two small steamers, but the trade of the port was carried on chiefly by sailing

vessels. These used to lie three and four abreast in the river from the "Pepper Box" up to where the Eden Gardens now are, and they added considerably to the attraction and adornment of this particular section of the Strand. There were no docks or jetties, and all loading and unloading had to be done over the side into lighters and country boats.

Travelling in the mofussil in those days, as may be imagined, was not a pleasant and easy business. The Eastern Bengal Railway was only built as far as Kooshteah, and beyond that the traveller had to go by boat, bullock cart and *palkigharry*. Assam was quite cut off, and a journey up there was a serious undertaking. There were no railways or steamers, and the traveller had to go in a budgerow, a sort of house-boat, and the journey took at least a month each way. Tea was then, of course, quite in its infancy.

Lord Mayo.

Of all the Viceroys in my time the most popular, officially, socially, and in every way, was Lord Mayo (1869 to 1872). He was essentially a ruler, a man of commanding presence and outstanding ability, a lover of sport of all kinds, in short a Governor-General in every sense of the word. He never once allowed it to escape his memory, nor did he permit anyone



Present view of Medical College Hospital

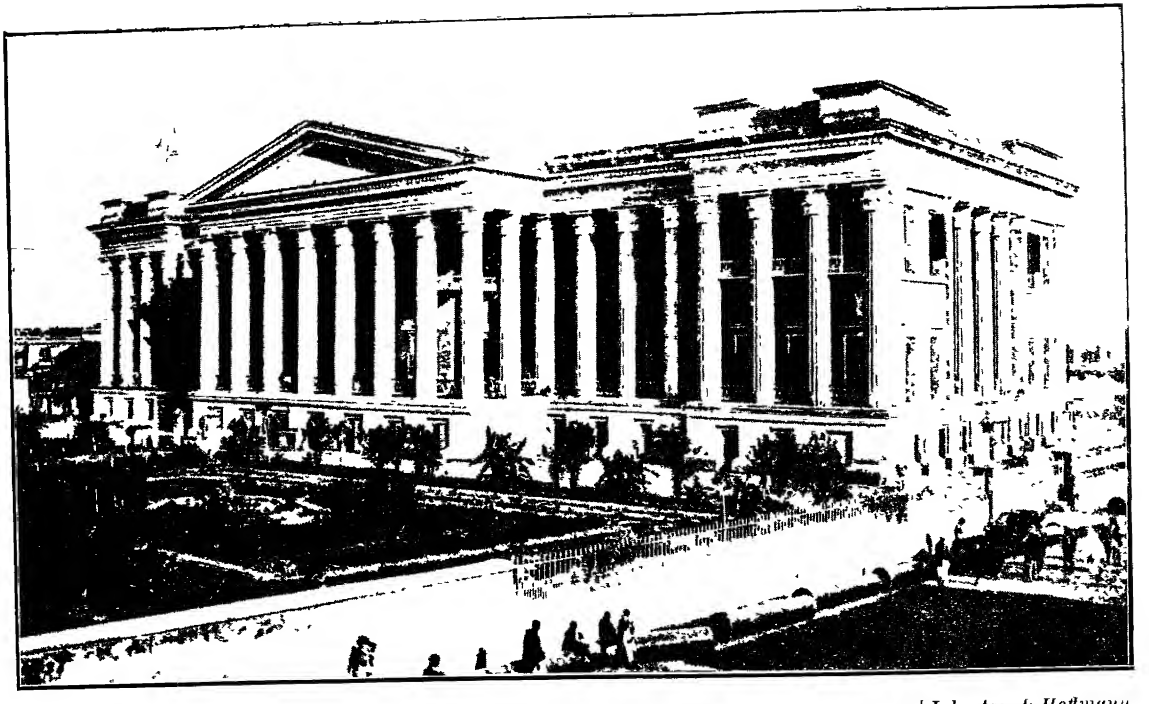


Photo. by] The Medical College Hospital. [*Johnston & Hoffmann*

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Scene in Eden Gardens.

else to forget, that he was the absolute and actual representative of Her Majesty Queen Victoria, and that in him was personified the very embodiment of her rule and authority in India. He thoroughly understood the Indian appreciation of the spectacular, and this understanding was doubtless the reason for the punctilious dignity with which he invested all his public and semi-public functions, while the hospitality at Government House during his régime was truly regal. His statue on the maidan gives a good idea of his commanding appearance.

It used to be one of the sights of the cold weather on State occasions, and a spectacle once witnessed not soon forgotten, to see Lord Mayo sally forth out of the gates of Government House. Seated in an open carriage-and-four, faced by his military secretary and senior aide-de-camp, wearing on the breast of his surtout the insignia of the Order of the Star of India, looking like what he really was, a king of men, and sweep rapidly across the maidan, almost hidden from sight by a dense cloud of the bodyguard enveloping the viceregal equipage, accoutred in their picturesque, long, bright scarlet tunics, hessian boots, and semi-barbaric head-dress, with lances in rest, and pennons, red and white, gaily fluttering in the breeze.

He was beloved by all who had the good fortune to be closely associated with him, and when he was struck down by the hand of a Wahabi life-convict on the occasion of his visit to the Andamans, in the cold weather of 1871-72, I have no hesitation in saying that all felt they had sustained a personal loss. I shall never forget the thrill of horror and grief that ran through the whole of the European community in Calcutta on receipt of the intelligence of his assassination, which was widespread, and which was also shared by the Indian element. His body was brought to Calcutta and landed at Prinseps Ghât, whence it was conveyed in State to Government House. It was a very solemn and affecting scene as the cortege slowly wended its sad and mournful way along Strand Road and past the Eden Gardens to the strains of the "Dead March in Saul," amidst the hushed silence of a vast concourse of people, both European and Indian, who had assembled along the route to pay their last tribute of respect to their dead Viceroy. Many a silent tear was shed to his beloved and revered memory. On the arrival of the body at Government House it was immediately embalmed, and lay in State for several days, being then transported to England. Thus passed away one of the noblest, most gallant and true-hearted gentlemen who ever ruled over the destinies of the Indian Empire.

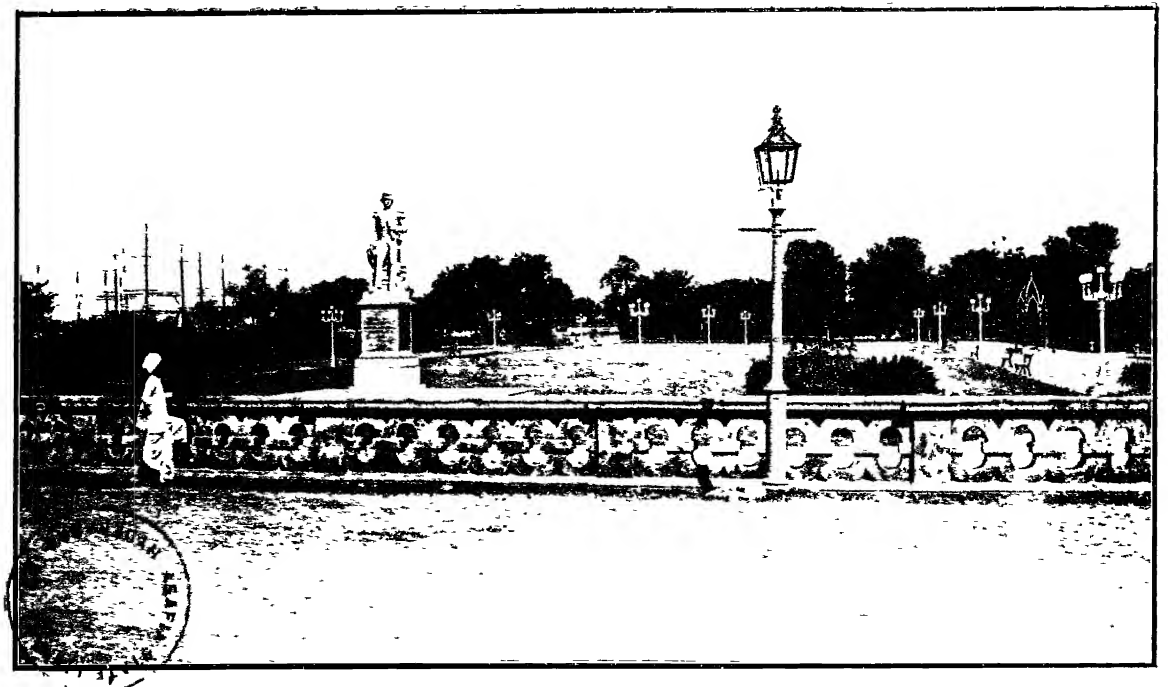
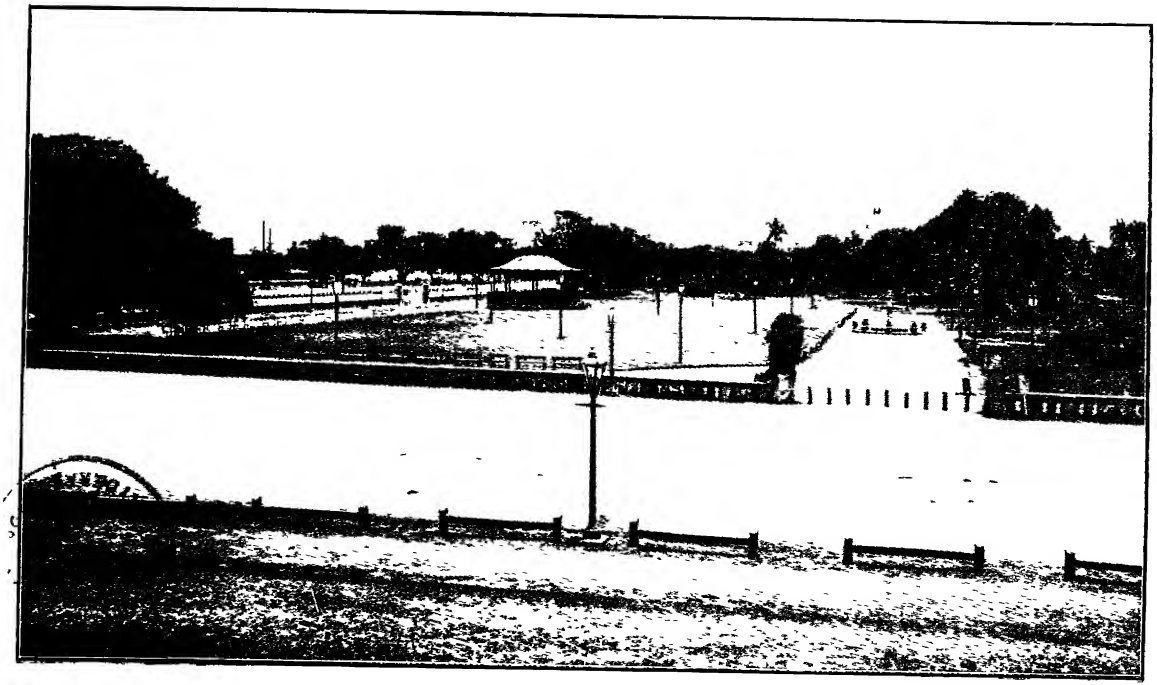


Photo. by] Old view of Eden Gardens. *[Johnston & Hoffmann*



Present-day view of Eden Gardens.

A Lady Mayo Story.

Lady Mayo had also a very proper and high conception of the dignity of her position and what was due to her as the consort of the Viceroy, and on one occasion she gave practical effect to her views. Her ladyship was one evening going for an airing, and Captain————, an A.-D.-C., who was a great favourite in society, and had possibly been a little spoilt, was ordered to be in attendance. He sauntered delicately and leisurely along to take his seat in the carriage wearing a forage cap. The moment Lady Mayo saw him she very politely informed him that when an aide-de-camp attended on the wife of the Viceroy it was incumbent on him to be attired in all respects as he would be when he was in attendance on the Viceroy himself, and requested him forthwith to make the necessary change. The captain, of course, had to obey, much to his chagrin, and he was never allowed to forget the incident by his friends in Calcutta society.

Lord Dufferin.

The next Viceroy to whom I would unhesitatingly award the second pride of place as regards popularity was the late Lord Dufferin, who by his courtly and charming personality appealed to, and won, the hearts of all who had the privilege of any intercourse with him.

I very well remember the occasion on which I had the honour of seeing and speaking to him for the first time. I was standing talking to a friend looking on at a game of polo on the maidan. It was only a friendly match between the two Calcutta teams and there were very few spectators present. I happened to turn my head when I saw a gentleman approaching, whom I did not know. He came up to me and smilingly held out his hand, and at that moment it suddenly dawned upon me that I was in the presence of our new Viceroy, Lord Dufferin. He made a few pleasant remarks and then passed quietly on to another part of the ground. He had driven up quite unexpectedly and unostentatiously, and I did not see even an A.-D.-C. in attendance.

Lord Ripon.

In addition to his own charming gifts, Lord Dufferin had the advantage of succeeding a Viceroy (Lord Ripon), who had embittered and aroused the enmity of the whole European community by using all the great powers at his command in obstinately persisting in foisting upon the country the most iniquitous and ill-advised measure conceivable, in spite of the strongest protests, both public and private. I refer, of course, to the obnoxious Ilbert Bill of sinister, worldwide fame. By the provisions

Photo. by] Palm avenue in Botanical Gardens. [*Johnston & Hoffmann*

of this Bill, it was enacted that any native magistrate of a certain status should be empowered to try criminally, European-born subjects. I have never seen or heard such a storm of seething rage and indignation as then swept through the length and breadth of the land and which at one time threatened serious consequences. Fortunately at the head of the European non-official community we had in the person of Mr. Keswick, senior partner in Jardine Skinner & Co., then the premier firm in Calcutta, a man of undoubted ability and most forcible and independent character, who fought the battle against the Government in a most masterly manner. I think that it was due in a great measure to him that several members of the Government were won over to our side, notably Sir Rivers Thompson, then Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal, who was seriously ill at the time, but rose up from a sick-bed to attend the Council and speak and vote against the Bill ; also Mr. Thomas, lately deceased, the member for Madras, who cast aside all personal considerations of future advancement to enter an able and strong protest against this most iniquitous measure. I remember it was in contemplation to hold a monster meeting on the maidan in the big tent of Wilson's Circus which then happened to be in Calcutta, but in the meantime it was announced that wiser counsels had prevailed, and

Lord Ripon had reluctantly climbed down, I believe, after most strenuous persuasion, and had consented to a compromise by agreeing to the introduction of a clause in the Bill conferring the right of option on European-born subjects electing to be tried or not by a native magistrate. Thus ended the most sensational and exciting controversy Calcutta has ever experienced, and one which, unfortunately, struck a note of discord between the European and Indian communities, the effects of which are still apparent, and in a measure marred that feeling of kindliness and mutual trust and good-will that formerly existed between the two races.

A Much-changed City.

As for the appearance of Calcutta half a century and more ago, it was very different to what it is now, and there were, of course, none of the amenities of life which make the city a pleasant place to live in to-day, even in the hot weather and rains. There were no paved side-walks, the water supply came from tanks and wells, there were no electric lights or fans, and no telephone. The drainage system was of the crudest with open drains in many side streets. There were no "Mansions" or blocks of flats as there are now, and generally the city was a very different place to the Calcutta of to-day. The floods in the streets are pretty bad at the present

time after a heavy monsoon storm, but nothing like what they were then. I remember going to office one morning after three days and nights of heavy rain, and at the corner of Park and Free School Streets, where Park Mansions stand now, there was quite a lake from which as I was passing I was startled to see a tall form rise from the water. It was one of the masters of the Doveton College, who had taken his boys to bathe there, and the water must have been fully three or four feet deep !

The residential quarter was then, as now, " South of Park Street," with the difference that where Alipore Park now is was a big open field with a factory, which was called the Arrowroot Farm Rainey Park, Ballygunge, was a big building called Rainey Castle, standing in its own extensive grounds, owned by a Mr. Griffiths, and occupied as a chummery. On the other side was a large building with an enormous compound called the Park Chummery, now converted into the Park, Ballygunge, while Queen's Park and Sunny Park were waste jungly land.

Scott's Lane Mission.

There were no Canons at the Cathedral in my early days. The services were conducted as now, principally by the Senior and Junior Chaplains, the Bishop and Archdeacon occasionally taking part when in residence in

Calcutta. Scott's Lane Mission was started in Bishop Millman's time, from very small beginnings, in the year 1872, by the late Mr. Parsons, former Secretary of the Chamber of Commerce, and myself. How I became connected with the opening of the Mission was in this wise. I happened at the time to be chumming with the Rev. Mr. Stewart Dyer, his wife and family, who was Junior Chaplain at the Cathedral, and he returned one morning from early service and informed me that the Rev. Mr. Atlay, Senior Chaplain, who subsequently became Archdeacon of Calcutta, also a personal friend of mine, had, in consultation with the Bishop, decided on starting a Mission in the poorer quarter of the town, and had fixed on the district known as Baitakhana, of which Scott's Lane formed the central portion, and had expressed a strong desire that Mr. Parsons and myself should undertake the preliminary work. I felt at first very diffident in the matter, as I had never had any experience of this kind before, but they so earnestly pressed the point upon me that I at last consented, and promised to do all in my power to carry out their wishes. We commenced in the first instance by making a house-to-house call upon all the people in the neighbourhood, and on account of our business engagements in the daytime this had to be done in the early morning. As a rule, we started on our rounds

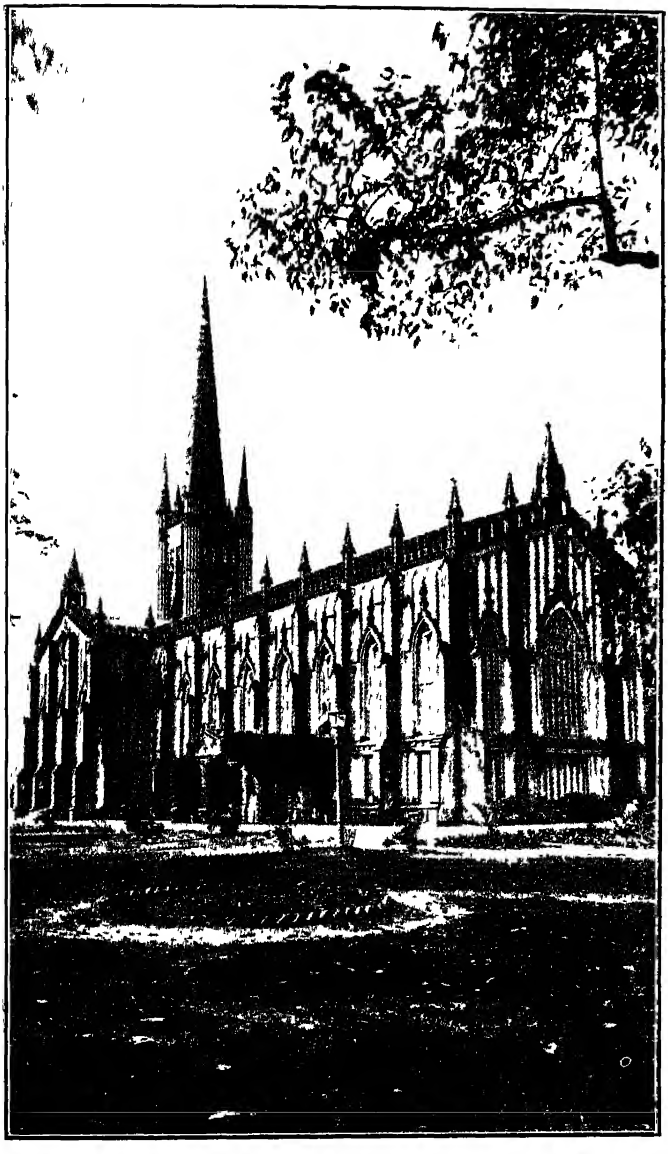
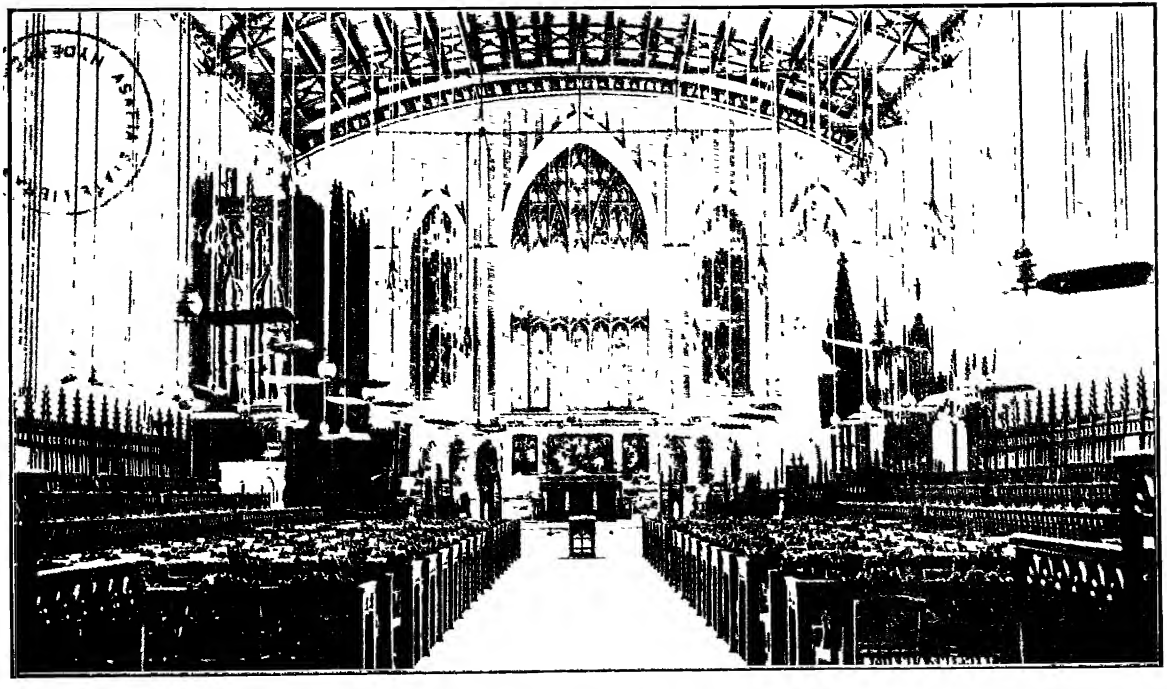


Photo. by] St. Paul's Cathedral. [*Johnston Hoffmann.*



Phto. by] Interior of St. Paul's Cathedral, showing eastern half *[Bourne & Shepherd*

somewhere about 7 A.M., and put in about a couple of hours' work. In our perambulations, we met, of course, all sorts and conditions of people, and one morning I recollect we got the surprise of our lives. We came across a large, wooden gateway, rather common in those days to a particular class of house, and forthwith proceeded to try to arouse the inmates. We knocked and waited for a long time and could get no answer, and were on the point of going away, thinking the house was empty, when all at once the gate was swung violently open, and a lady in *deshabille*, with hair hanging down her back, appeared before us almost inarticulate with rage, eyes blazing with passion, and demanding to know, in furious tones, what we wanted and meant by creating a disturbance in the neighbourhood at that hour in the morning, hammering at her gate in that manner. We were almost struck dumb, at least I was, but Mr. Parsons, I believe, managed to stammer out something or other, in the midst of which the gate was slammed to violently in our faces and we had to beat an ignominious retreat. It is, of course, needless to say we never repeated our visit nor tried to induce the lady to enter the fold.

After a little while, we made friends with a good many of the people round about, who were at first rather inclined to be shy and suspicious, but eventually we obtained promises that they

would send their children to the school and services which we intended shortly to hold. We then took a small ground floor tenement standing in its own compound, which had evidently not been occupied for some time, as the man in charge, soon after we had entered into possession, caught two large cobras. We furnished the centre room in a modest sort of fashion and started business. We used to take it in turn every Sunday evening, and later on we secured the loan of a harmonium, and were happy in enlisting the good offices of a lady of the name of Cameron, who played all the hymn tunes for us, to the accompaniment of which the children sang, and this had the effect of considerably brightening and enlivening the services. Later on we were joined by two others, one a young barrister of the High Court, both of whose names I have most unfortunately forgotten.

We carried on in this manner for about two years, when I resigned, feeling that my place could be filled by much better and abler men. The Rev. E. Darley took over charge about 1877, until the late Canon Jackson appeared on the scene, and infused new vigour and fresh life into the Mission. He was ably assisted by the lady who eventually became his wife, who had been the widow of Mr. Charles Piffard, a well-known and highly respected member of the

Calcutta Bar, and she was also the sister of our popular fellow-citizen, Mr. J. T. Hume. Canon and Mrs. Jackson, by their strenuous activity and energy, combined with the beautiful and simple life of self-denial and sacrifice they daily lived, succeeded in developing the scope of the Mission and creating it into the important centre of religious activity that we see in Calcutta at the present day. Though they have gone never to return, their spirit still lives, and the noble work they so wonderfully achieved is for ever imperishably enshrined in letters of gold and will stand out for all time as a beacon and an example to generations yet unborn.

The Oxford Mission.

The Oxford Mission was founded in the year 1880, and it was my very good fortune to meet the first three members who started the Mission shortly after their arrival in Calcutta; and I have never forgotten the sense of honour I then felt that their friendship conferred upon me. Their names were the Rev. Mr. Willis, the Rev. Mr. Hornby, and the Rev. Mr. Brown, and the following year their ranks were strengthened by the advent of the Rev. Mr. Argles. I was introduced to them by the Rev. F. Stewart Dyer, above referred to, who was then acting Chaplain of the Free School. I used often to meet them at his house in the parsonage in the

school compound. For about the first five years they were located at 154, Bow Bazar Street, opposite the Church of Our Lady of Dolours. After that they removed to their present spacious premises at 42, Cornwallis Street. The only one now left is the Rev. Canon Brown who is the present Superior of the Mission. Mr. Willis completely broke down in health in 1883, and went home. He died in 1898. Mr. Argles also had to leave India on account of ill-health, and died in 1883. Mr. Hornby has since become Bishop of Nassau. The Rev. Canon Holmes, who joined the Mission about fifteen years ago, is closely associated with Canon Brown in the working of the Mission House in Calcutta, and affords most valuable help. Of course there are other members working in the outlying districts.

[*Up to this point I had published my Recollections in three articles in the columns of the "Statesman" of the 22nd and 29th July and 5th August last, and then left Calcutta for a tour up-country, and it was whilst staying at Naini Tal and Lucknow that I completed the series which is now published for the first time.*]

The Great Cyclone of 1864.

The great cyclone occurred on the 4th October, 1864, and well do I remember it, as it was the Express day for posting letters

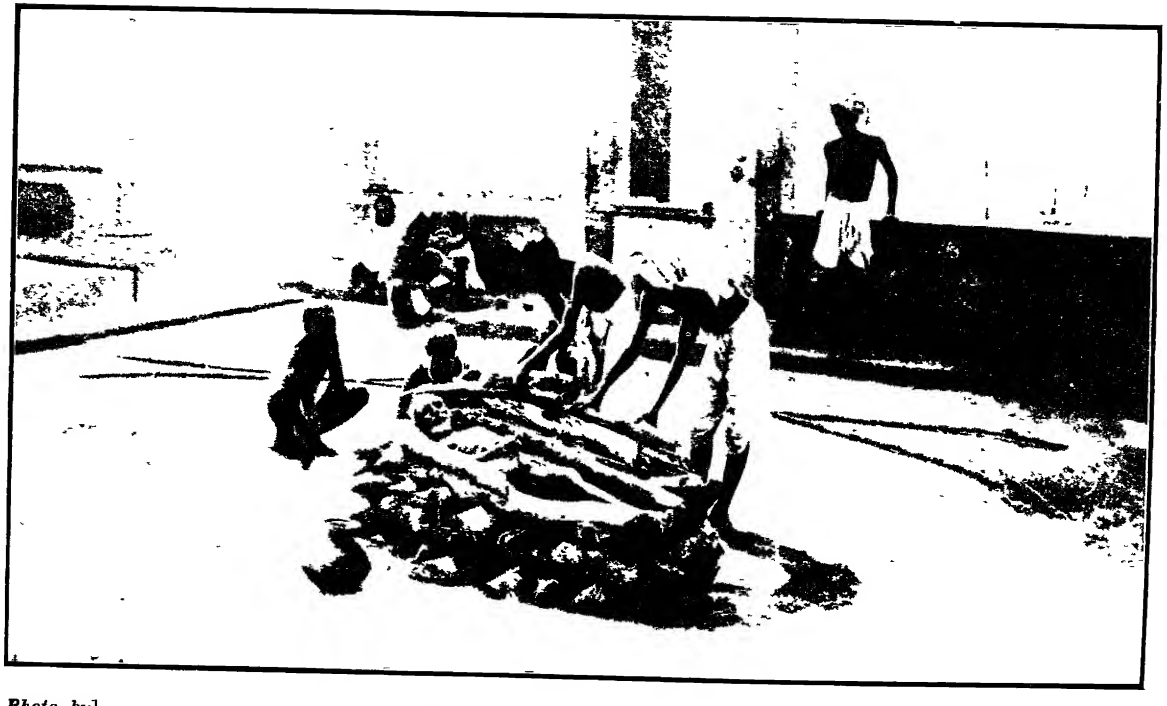


Photo. by] The Burning Ghat, Nimtollah [*Bourne & Shepherd.*

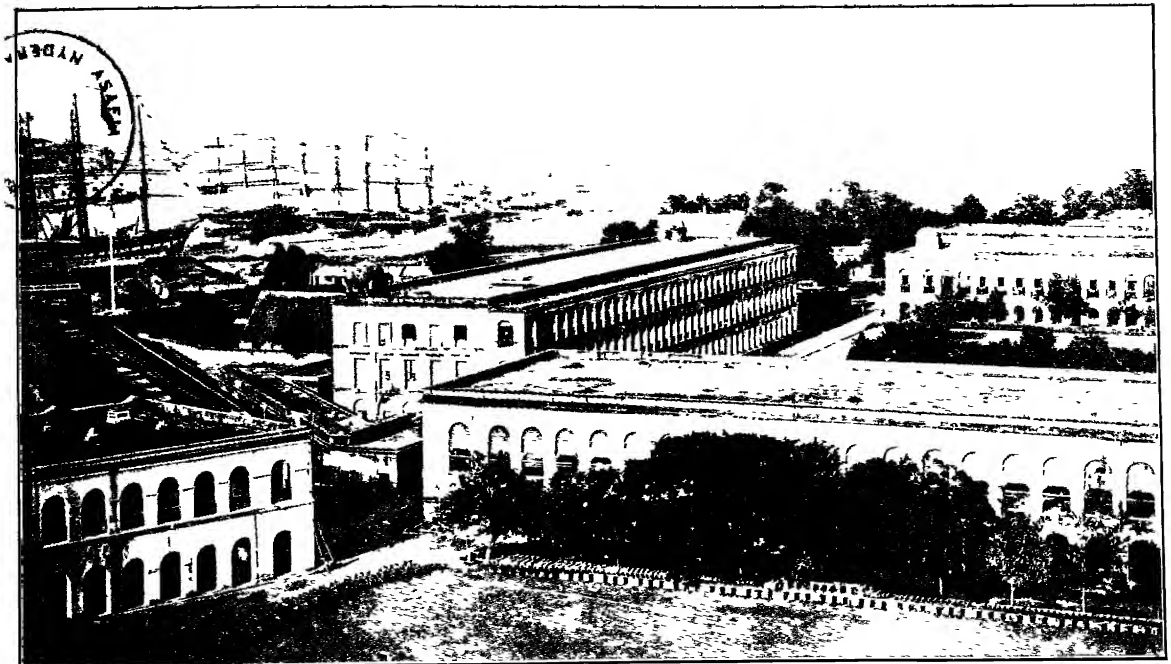


Photo. by] View of the River Hooghly, with shipping from Fort William [*Johnston & Hoffmann.*

viâ Bombay, and an extra fee of one rupee was charged on each ordinary letter. At that time the foreign mail went out fortnightly, alternately from Bombay and Calcutta. I happened to be rather behindhand with my letters, and was very busily engaged in office until about 6 o'clock in the evening, when I ventured outside to go to the post office, by which time the fury of the storm had almost spent itself. Although confined indoors without any actual knowledge of the awful destruction that was going on, I was not altogether devoid of a certain degree of excitement.

The office of the firm with which I was associated was then known as 7, New China Bazar Street, now Royal Exchange Place, and my room, which had several windows, was on the north side on the first floor. The wind kept constantly veering round from all points of the compass, and at one period of the day blew with terrific violence from the north—right at the back of where I was seated. I got up from time to time and closely inspected the fastenings of the windows, which, for a long while, seemed to be all right, but later on I noticed ominous signs that some of the cross-bars were weakening. It then became a question as to whether and for how long they could continue to withstand the terrible strain to which they were being subjected, and,

forthwith, I and my co-assistants proceeded to wedge stools and bars against them, which most providentially had the desired effect. Had they given way, the place would have been clean swept from end to end and completely wrecked. In the course of the morning my Burra Sahib, who was married, and had left his wife all alone in their house, 3, Loudon Street, was, of course, greatly perturbed and anxious as to her safety, and at about 11 o'clock he made up his mind to try and get back home again, and ordered out his buggy. I must confess I felt horribly nervous at the time, as he was a tall heavily built man, and it was just a toss-up as to whether he could get through or not. He might very easily have been capsized and the consequences would probably have proved disastrous. Fortunately, however, nothing happened and he reached home in safety.

The cyclone commenced before midnight the previous evening and increased in intensity as daylight approached and the day advanced. It was pretty bad when I left the house at about 9 o'clock for office, still I managed to struggle through. But it was an entirely different proposition with which I was confronted on my return journey in the evening. I was then living in a chummery in Circular Road, Ballygunge, and the entrance from Lower

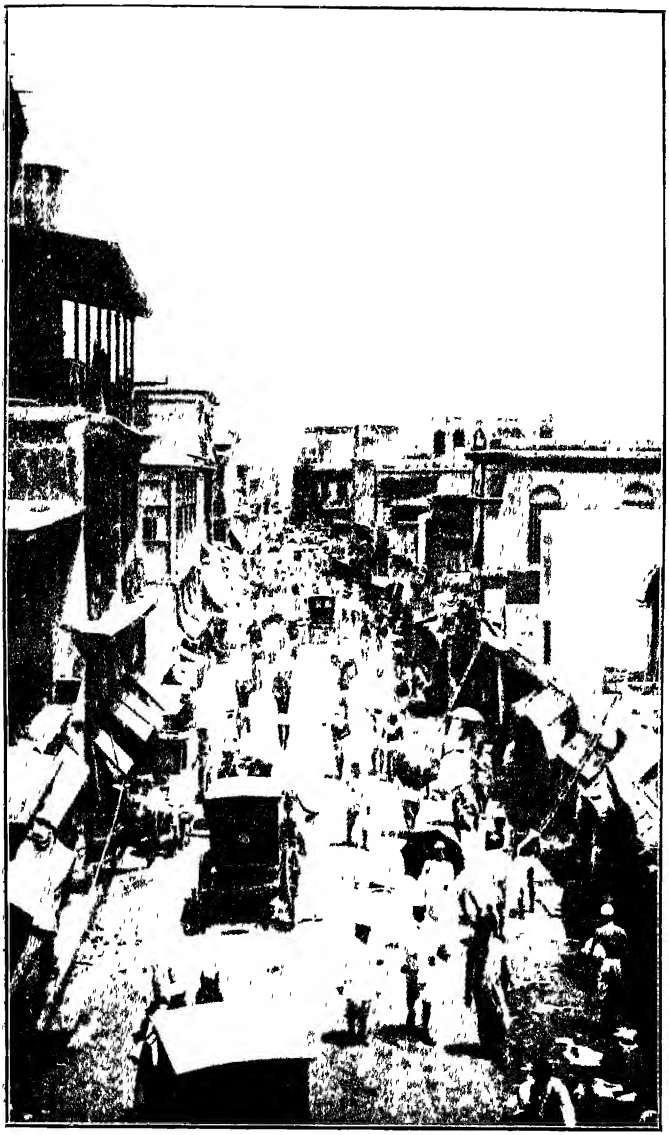


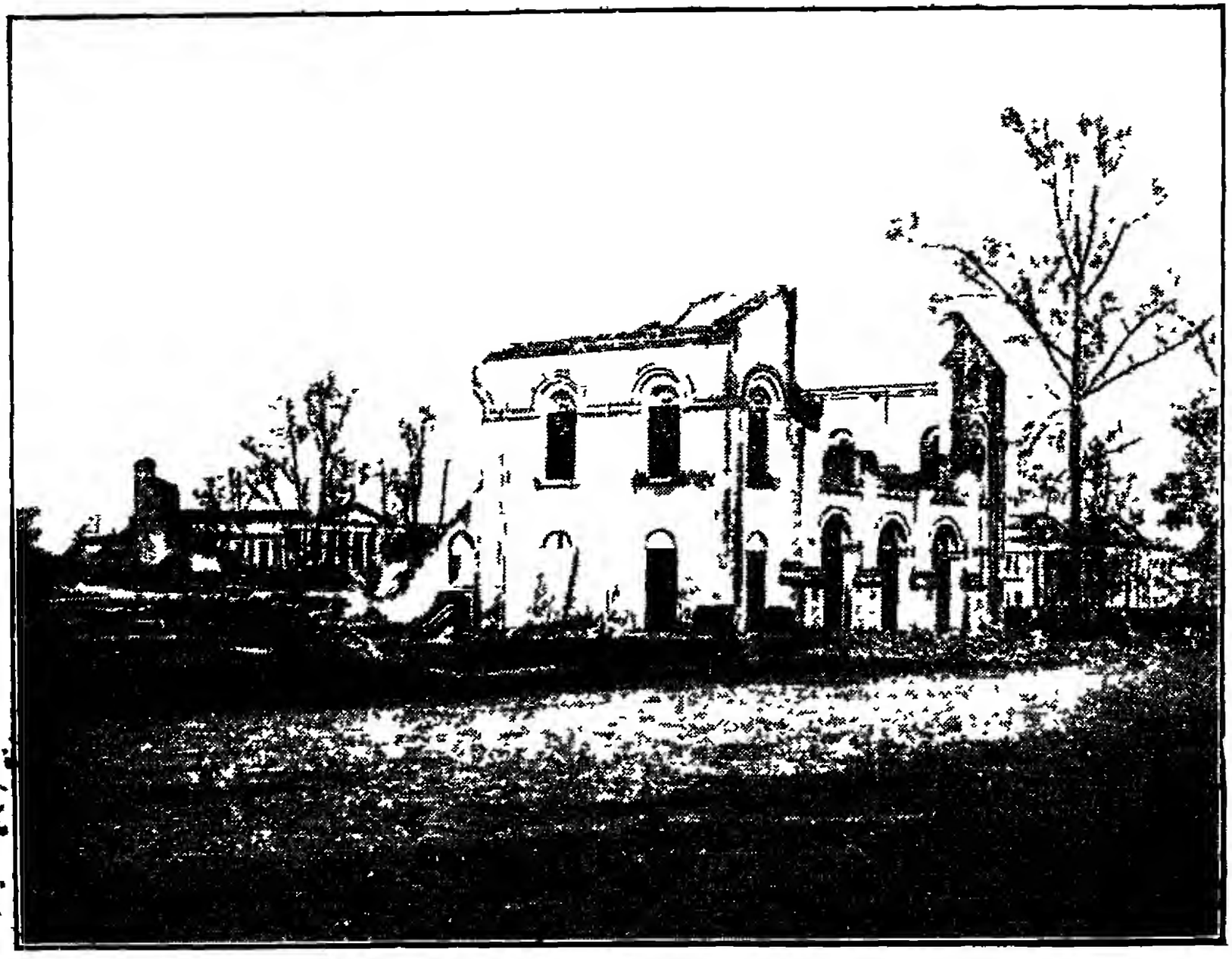
Photo. by] A Street in Bulla Bazar. *[B. & S*

Photo. by] Chitpore Road [*Bourne & Shepherd.*

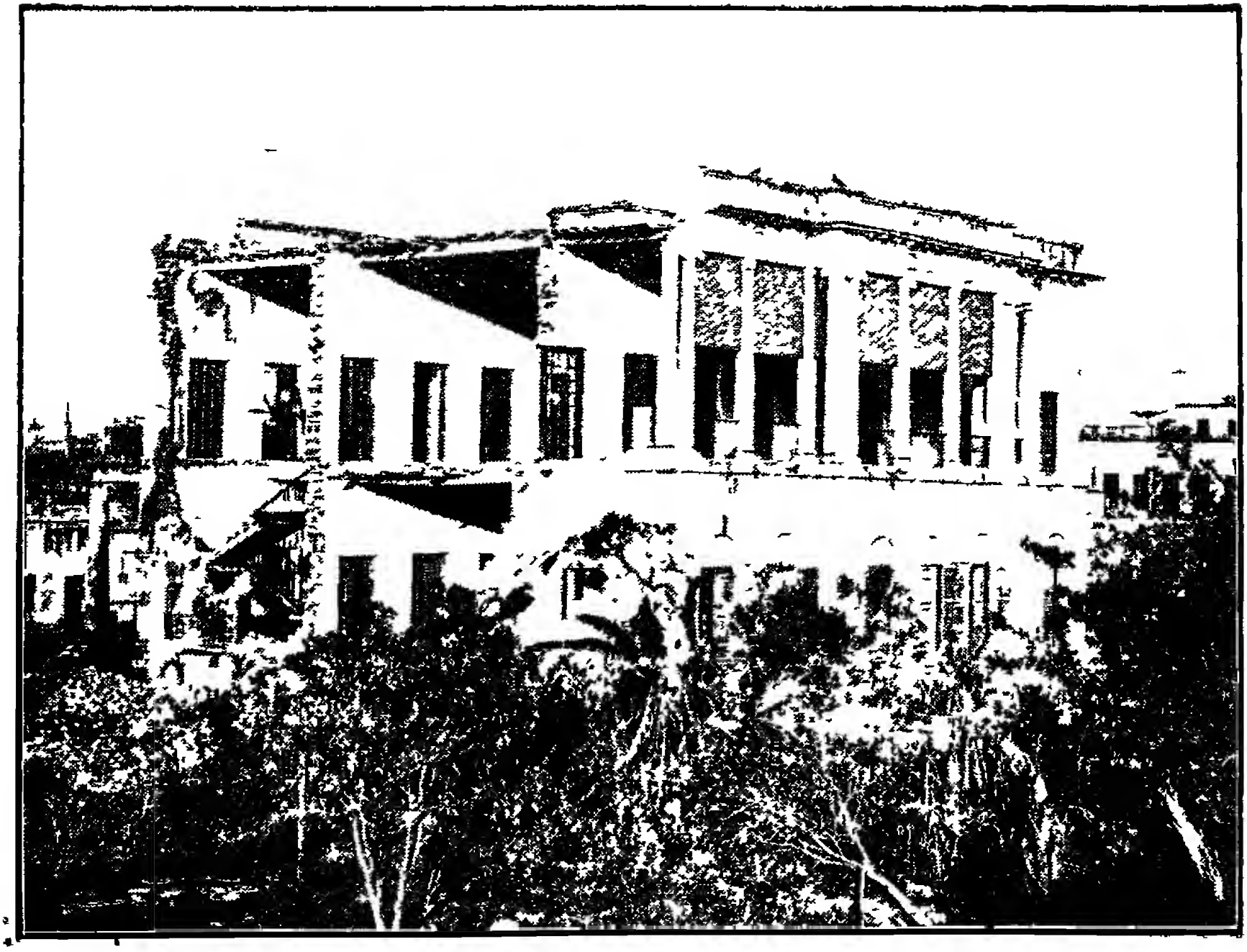
Circular Road, Calcutta, was so blocked up with fallen trees and other *debris* that I found it impossible to make headway against it in my gharry, so I sent it back to the office and walked to the house, or rather scrambled over trees and other obstacles the best way I could.

I can never forget the terrible scene of heartbreaking desolation and destruction that I encountered in every direction on going down to office next morning. It seemed at first sight as if the town had suffered from the effects of a bombardment. As I slowly wended my way along the various streets and across the maidan, I was confronted on all sides with striking evidence of the frightful ruin that had overtaken the city. On every hand were to be seen great stately trees, that had safely weathered innumerable storms of the past, lying prone on their sides, either uprooted or cut through as with a knife: many in falling had broken through the masonry of the boundary walls of the compounds in which they were growing, greatly intensifying the look of misery and desolation. There were also to be seen myriads of branches of trees stripped off and flung about in all directions in the wildest confusion, and in some parts the ground was so thickly strewn with fallen leaves as to form a sort of carpet.

Many of the buildings had also suffered very severely. Some had had their verandahs and sides blown in, and others had had corners literally cut off where the fury of the storm had struck a particular angle. Amongst some others that had fared so badly was unhappily St. James's Theatre in Circular Road, the home of the "CATS." All the members at once felt that it had become a thing of the past, as the owner, Mr. Jimmy Brown, who had built it at a cost of Rs. 30,000, could never afford the expense of repairing it. The picture will show the wreck it had become. But bad and distressing as all this appeared to be, it absolutely paled into insignificance in comparison with what I was to witness on arrival at the river bank. The sight that there greeted me was truly appalling and beggared description. Of the whole of that grand and superb array of vessels which had been seen the day before gracefully riding safely at their moorings, decked out in all their pride and glory and lined up alongside the Strand, three and four abreast from the Pepper Box to the Eden Gardens, one alone was left, all the others having been violently torn adrift and swept clean away to the four winds of heaven. Besides these were all the country traders moored to the south of the Pepper Box known as Coolie Bazar, extending as far as Tackta



Remains of St. James's Theatre, Circular Road.



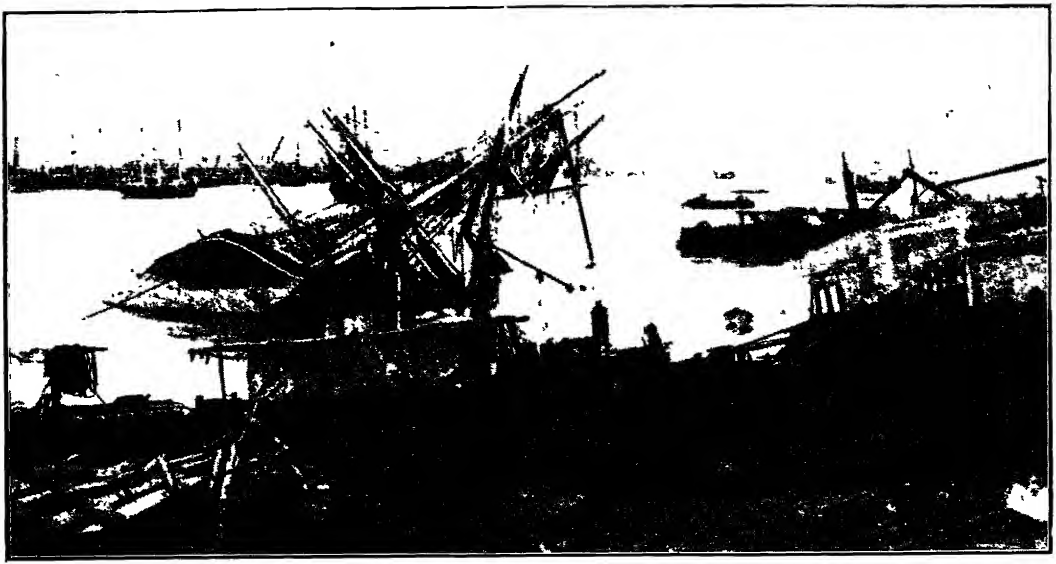
Remains of Col. Turner's House, 2, Wood Street.

Ghat, which shared the same fate. They had all been driven helter-skelter in every direction, some as far north as Cossipore, and one vessel, the *Earl of Clare,* was landed high and dry on the present site of the assistants' bungalow of the north mill of the Barnagore Jute Company. One of the P. & O. boats lying at Garden Reach was deposited for some distance inland on the opposite side of the river close to the Botanical Gardens, and the *Govindpur* was driven helplessly in a crippled state close to the river bank just opposite to the Port Office on Strand Road, and was lying for hours almost on her beam ends on the port side facing the river. The crew had in desperation sought refuge in the rigging, from which eventually and with extreme difficulty they were happily and safely rescued. One of Apcar & Co.'s China steamers, the *Thunder,* was driven well inside Colvin Ghat and on to the Strand at the bottom of Hastings Street.

But the majority of ships seemed to have been flung together in a confused tangled mass close to the Howrah Railway Ghat. Many were sunk; others in the act of sinking; and the remainder so battered and hammered about as to defy description, rendering it extremely difficult to determine whether most of them would not become a constructive loss. My eldest brother was in Calcutta at the time, in

command of a vessel called the *Vespasian.* He had been spending the previous night at my chummery at Ballygunge, and when he went the next morning to get on board his ship she was nowhere to be seen. At last he traced her, jammed in amongst the ruck at Howrah, and that was the last he ever saw of her, and he had subsequently to return home overland minus his vessel. He afterwards joined the service of the Pacific Steam Navigation Co., eventually becoming commodore of the fleet, a position which he held for a great number of years, until his final retirement.

In order to convey some slight idea of the force of the wind I will just mention that there was in command of one of the vessels in port a man of great weight and bulk who had been spending the night on shore. When he attempted to cross the maidan on foot the next morning he was thrown violently down, flat on his face, two or three times, and he had to scramble back again the best way he could. Another striking evidence of the violence of the storm was to be seen in the myriads of dead crows lying about all over the place, and it really seemed as if there was not one left alive. But unfortunately it was not long before we were undeceived, and they soon appeared to be quite as numerous as ever. As I have already stated, the destruction of trees and shrubs was



The "Govindpur" on her Beam Ends.

S S "Thunder" on shore, at Colvin Ghat.

very great—a loss that the city could ill afford, more particularly on the maidan, which at that time was very bare of trees and foliage generally. The various topes dotted about that we now see had not then come into existence, and the avenue of trees lining the sides of Mayo Road had only been recently planted.

I recollect there were also no trees surrounding Government House, nor in the vicinity of the Eden Gardens. And there were none on the space fronting Esplanade Row, West. Dalhousie Square and Old Court House Street were also very bare of trees—scarcely one to be seen. The loss of life amongst the natives was appalling, caused principally by the huge storm or tidal wave accompanying the cyclone, resembling a solid wall of water, which at Diamond Harbour rose to the height of 34 feet; when it reached Calcutta it was 27 to 28 feet, rushing up the Hooghly from the sea at the rate of 20 miles an hour, destroying and overwhelming everything it encountered in its wild and devastating career. It was, of course, a matter of extreme difficulty to arrive at any very reliable estimate of the number who perished, owing to the vast area of country over which the storm raged. Happily the death rate in Calcutta itself was, comparatively speaking, not so very great, and was confined more or less to the crews of small native craft

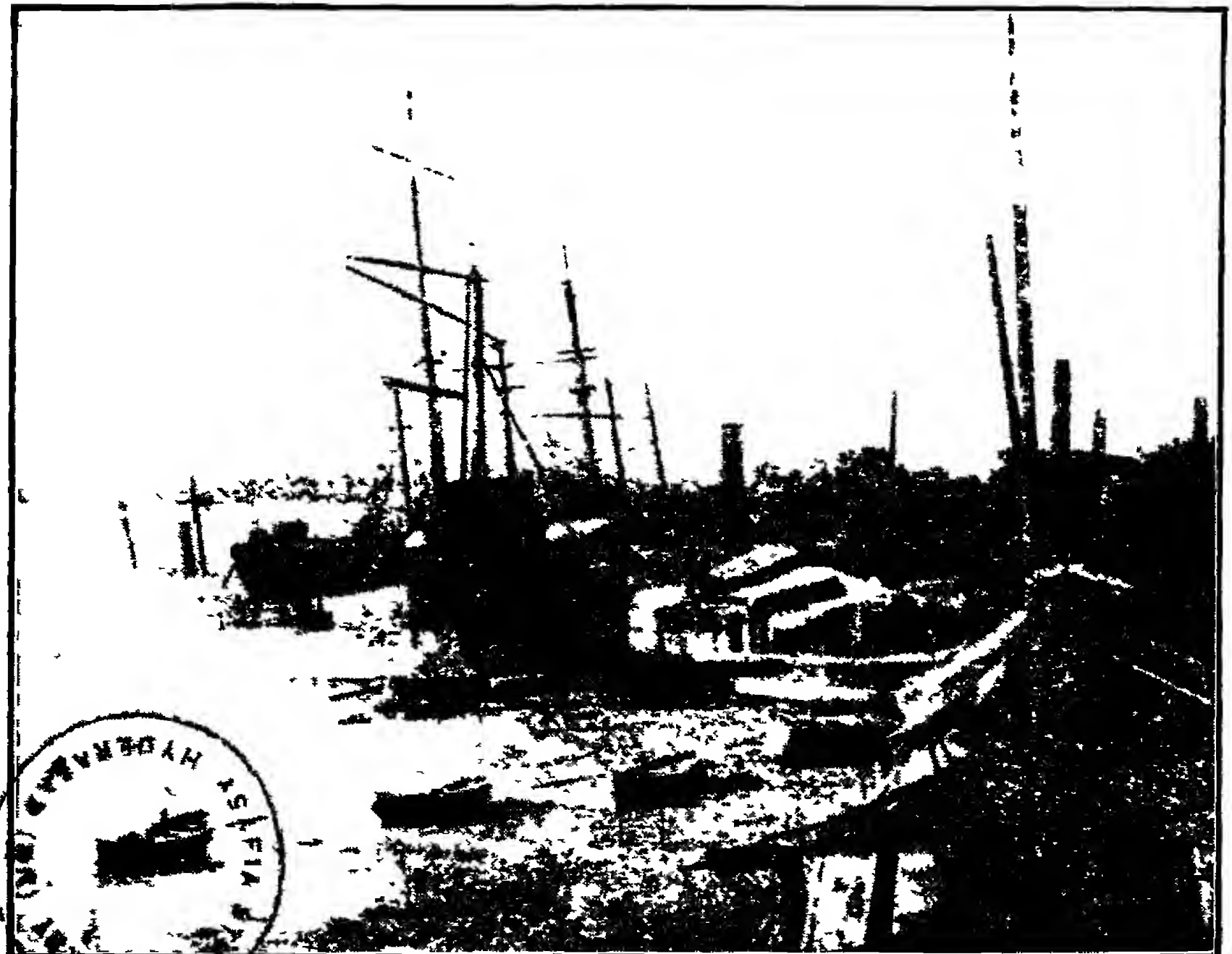
plying on the river, such as lighters, cargo-boats, dinghees, budgerows, and green-boats.

This closes a brief chapter of some of the incidents that occurred and which have flitted across my memory in this never-to-be-forgotten storm which nearly overwhelmed Calcutta in October 1864, and shook it literally to its very foundations; but no pen can adequately visualise the picture of awful desolation and ruin that it wrought and left behind in its terribly devastating course.

[*The pictures illustrating this chapter are from a collection in the possession of Messrs. Thacker, Spink & Co.*]

The Cyclone of 1867.

This happened about a month later than that of 1864, on the 1st November, 1867, and long past the usual period for storms of this violent nature. On this occasion I was occupying the top flat of what was then 12, Hastings Street, Colvin Ghat, next door to the offices of Grindlay & Co., and on the site of the building recently erected by Cox & Co. as a storing warehouse. It was a very old shaky kind of house of three storeys having an insecure-looking, narrow strip of railed-in wooden verandah skirting the whole length of the southern portion of the second and third flats, which many people now in Calcutta will doubtless recollect. It was by no



Some effects of the Cyclone at Garden Reach

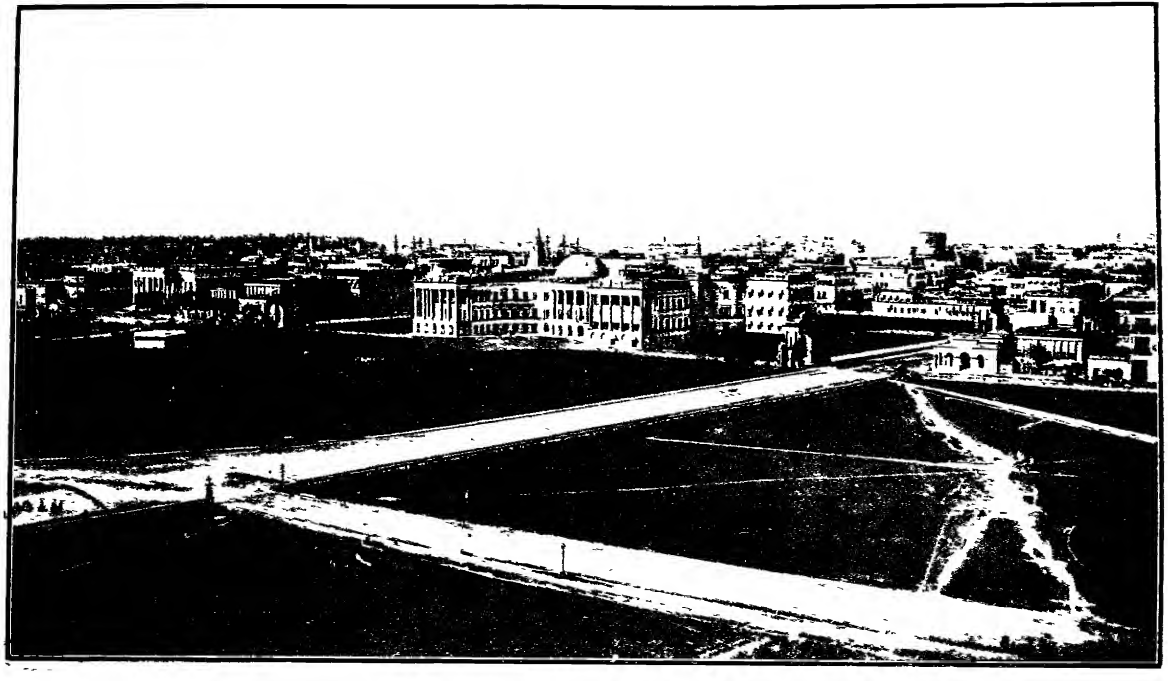


Photo. by] **Old view of Government House, showing Scott Thomson's corner.** *[Bourne & Shepherd*

means the sort of place one would choose to brave the terrors of a cyclone, and it also had the great disadvantage, by reason of its very exposed position, of being open to attack from all points of the compass.

The storm commenced earlier than that of 1864, late in the afternoon, and just about dusk appearances were so threatening that I went downstairs, with the intention of going outside to ascertain, if possible, whether it was likely to develop into a *pucca* cyclone or not. When I got there I found the wind was sweeping past the entrance in such fearfully violent gusts as to make it quite impossible for me to venture outside into the street, and I also detected that ominously sinister, weird and moaning sound that unmistakably warned me of the impending fact that a cyclone of considerable intensity was rapidly approaching. I immediately returned to my rooms and made everything as secure as I could for withstanding the fury of the storm. I had invited that evening a party of friends to dinner and to play whist afterwards, and they duly turned up to time. As the night wore on, the force of the wind gradually increased in intensity, and great gusts struck the building at all angles with such terrific force as to make it reel and tremble from top to bottom. I recollect I was not feeling at all nervous, not realising at the time the very great danger that threatened us all. But

one of my chums, a little stout man, well known at that time in the tea trade, of the name of Inskipp, usually a most cheery and genial soul, tried his best to instil into our minds the very serious risk we were running. He kept roaming about the room in a very distressed and restless manner, prophesying all sorts of disasters, winding up with the assertion that it would not at all surprise him if at any moment the house were to tumble down about our ears and bury the whole lot of us in its ruins. It was, however, all of no use. He could not succeed in frightening us; and the four of us continued to play whist, and now and then threw out at him a few chaffing remarks on his lugubrious and unhappy state. But later on we had a tremendous shock, and for the moment it seemed as if part of his prognostications were to come only too true. It appeared that the iron bar across one of the windows in my bedroom to the west, looking on to the river, leading off the sitting room in which we were seated, had given way, and the wind bursting through the closely-barred shutters with irresistible fury had forced open the door of communication between the two rooms. Most fortunately the shutters held or the whole flat would have been completely wrecked. It took all our combined efforts some time to force back the door and securely fasten it by jamming a music stool and chairs up against it. To add to our

discomfort, the roof was leaking like a sieve, and we had to place several bowls in each of the rooms, and my own room when I entered it the following morning when the storm had passed was a sight more easily imagined than described. Of course I had to find beds for all my guests, but it is needless to say that none of us got much sleep.

When daylight at length broke we all rushed to the windows, naturally expecting to see the same sort of debacle amongst the shipping as had overtaken it in the cyclone of 1864; but, to our intense joy and relief, not a single vessel had left her anchorage. This was partly due to the port authorities having learnt by bitter experience the necessity of considerably strengthening and improving the moorings, and also in a great measure to the absence of the storm-wave which had accompanied the previous cyclone and wrought such havoc and destruction. But all the same the loss of life and damage sustained, covering a large extent of country, must have been of serious and far-reaching magnitude. The city again suffered heavily in the matter of trees and shrubs, which were uprooted and, last of all, the crows of course contributed their usual heavy toll of death and temporary annihilation.

The Cyclone of 1887.

It is rather singular that though this happened about 20 years later than the other two,

the impression left on my mind as to the amount of actual damage it caused is not half so clear and distinct, and my recollections are confined more or less to one or two incidents of a personal nature. I remember however for one thing that I was in Darjeeling at the time, but I cannot recall any particulars that I may there have heard, or subsequently on my return to Calcutta, about the effect of the storm. I must therefore presume that nothing of a very startling nature did occur in Calcutta. There is, however, one outstanding event that I must relate, as it involved the loss of a man well known in business circles and very highly respected, and who was also a very dear and intimate friend of my own—Mr. Keith Sim, Agent of the Queen Insurance Co. before they amalgamated with the Royal Insurance Co. He had been suffering from a slight attack of fever and had been recommended to take a trip to the Sandheads. He accordingly embarked on a large and powerful steam tug, the *Retriever*, towing an outward bound vessel, the *Godiva*, but the weather from the early morning had been looking very lowering and threatening, and by the time they reached Saugor Island it had become infinitely worse. Why they were ever allowed to proceed to sea has always remained a mystery to me. It must, I think, have been some bungling on the part of the port authorities. The further they proceeded

down the Bay, the worse the weather became, until eventually they ran right bang into the very teeth of a severe cyclone. The result, as was to be expected, proved most disastrous. The hawser connecting the ship and steam tug snapped in two, being unequal to the tremendous strain, and they parted company. The vessel escaped by a miracle after having been battered about and driven in all directions. She was eventually rescued by the *Warren Hastings*, after the lapse of three days in the Eastern Channel, in a completely gutted condition, but the steam tug foundered with every soul on board. In the act of sinking, a most extraordinary and unheard-of thing happened. A lascar on board was violently shot up from below through one of the air ventilators of the steamer, and was found floating in the sea some 36 hours afterwards by a P. & O. steamer coming up the Bay to Calcutta. He was the one and only survivor left to tell the sad tale. Of course it could never be ascertained what actually occurred, but I recollect one of the theories propounded at the time was to the effect that the steamer had been drawn into the vortex of the cyclone, and she must then have been encompassed round about by a towering mass of pyramidical seas, tumbling in the wildest confusion from all points of the compass, which gradually led to the culmination of the final catastrophe by crashing down on to the deck

with irresistible and overwhelming force, literally smothering and engulfing her without a shadow of chance of recovery. Mrs. Keith Sim and her little boy were in Calcutta at the time, and great sympathy was expressed for them in their sad bereavement. The little boy has long since grown to man's estate, and is now occupying a position of great trust and responsibility as agent of the Commercial Union Assurance Co., and is thus emulating the activities and achievements of his much lamented father.

Government House.

It will doubtless be a matter of surprise to a good many people to hear of the change that has taken place in the venue of one of the principal functions of Government House. When I first arrived here and for many years afterwards the usual annual levee was held at 4 o'clock in the afternoon. There is also another very marked innovation in respect of the present procedure connected with presentations to His Excellency the Viceroy. Formerly all that one had to do was to send in a card, in response to a notification issued by the military secretary in the papers, addressed to the "First Aide-de-Camp" in waiting, marked on the outside of the envelope "For the Levee," which was then considered to be all that was necessary. On the day of the ceremony you took two cards with you, one of

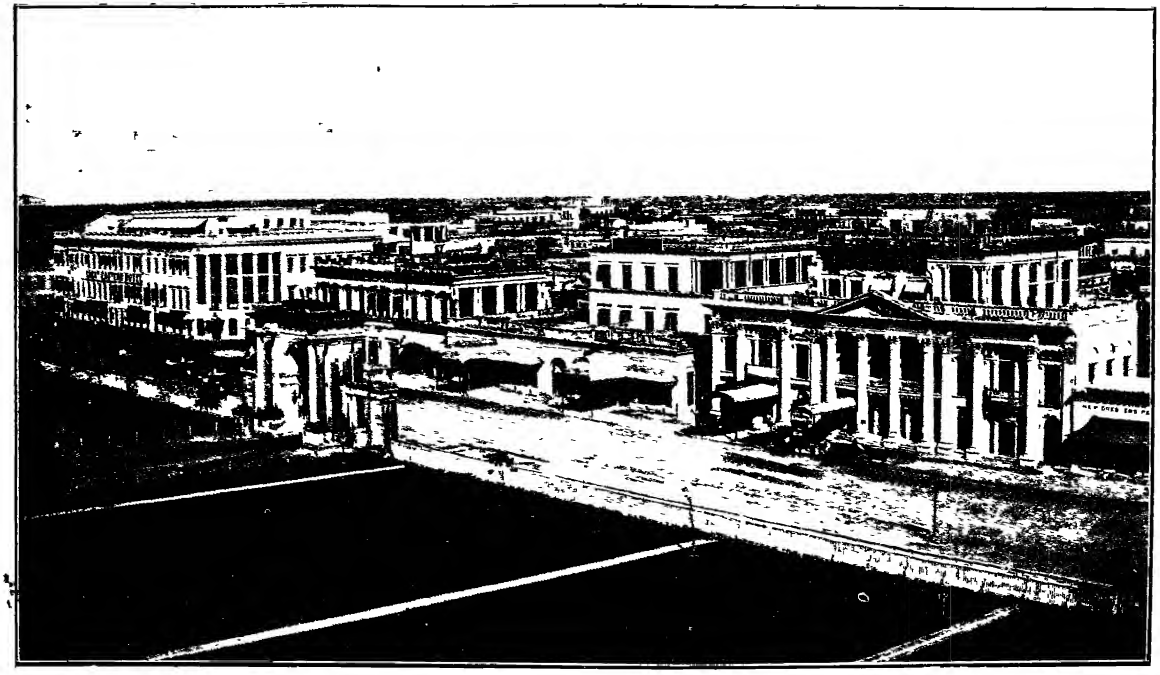


Photo. by] Old view of Government Place, East, and Old Court House Street. *[Johnston & Hoffmann.*

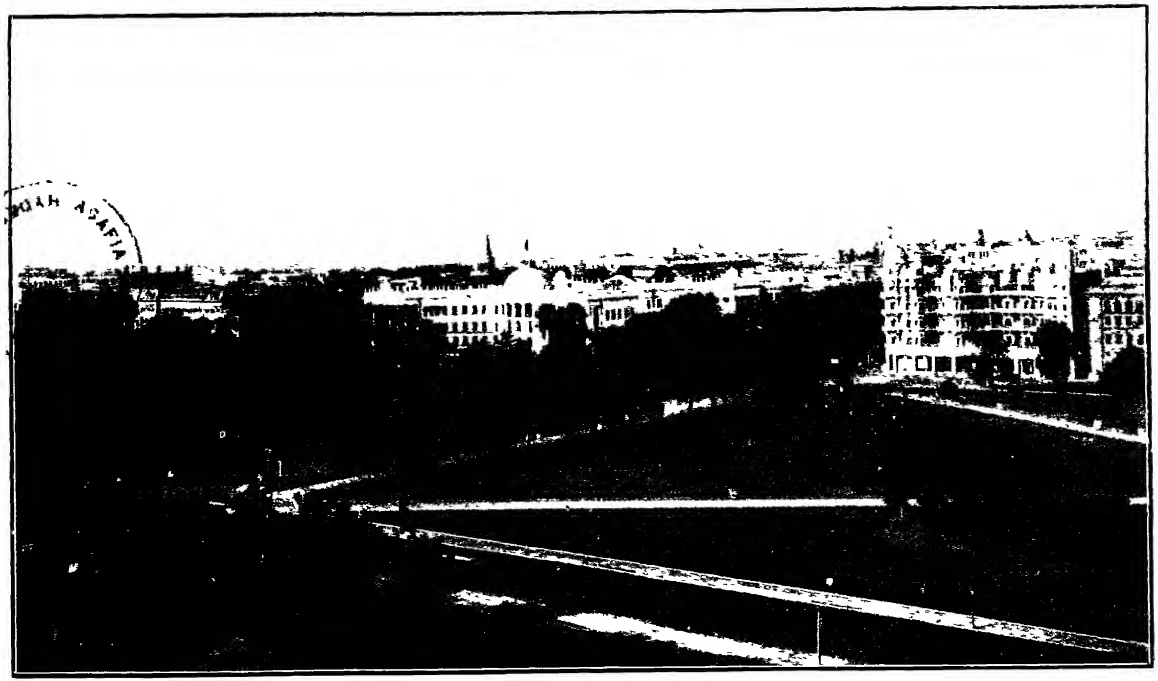


Photo. by] Present view of Government House, showing Esplanade Mansions. *[Bourne & Shepherd.*

which you deposited on a tray in the vestibule of Government House, and the other you retained, and on approaching the military secretary in the throne room you handed it over to him, the same as you do with the official card with which each person is furnished at the present day. In the event of your desiring to act as sponsor for a friend wishing to be presented, you enclosed in the same envelope, addressed to the aide-de-camp, a second card with his name inscribed thereon, stating the object for which it was forwarded, and he followed exactly the same formula as his introducer on entering the precincts of Government House. It was considered indispensable as now that any one making a presentation should personally attend the levee. The condition of things has so much changed since those times and the European population so greatly increased with advancing years that it was considered advisable to make some modification in the then existing rules so as to meet the altered requirements of the present time. I think the real meaning of the change is to be found in the belief that formerly existed in the minds of officials that every one who sent in his card for the levee in the old days was eligible for the entree to Government House. The procedure in respect of State Drawing Rooms has also undergone a considerable modification in one particular. Formerly

gentlemen were allowed to accompany their lady friends as far as the big hall and wait for them there until they emerged from the throne room and escort them upstairs to the ball room. This privilege was withdrawn very many years ago.

The hospitality of Government House was proverbial, and whilst the Viceroy and his entourage were residing in Calcutta, it was one perpetual round of gaiety and entertainments, week after week. They comprised dinners, evening parties, dances, garden parties, and occasional concert, At Homes, levees and Drawing Rooms, and, last of all, though not least, the annual State Ball to which I have already made previous reference which generally took place after Christmas in the month of January. To this all who had attended the levee were invited, and a very pretty sight and enjoyable affair it always proved to be. I think the number of guests attending these functions generally ran into a matter of 1 500, more or less.

As I have already remarked dancing was quite possible and pleasant except perhaps in the very early stages of the evening when it was a bit of a crush, but later on, more particularly towards supper and afterwards when real dancers came into their own and had the room more or less to themselves, it was a treat for the gods as the floor was always in an ideal state

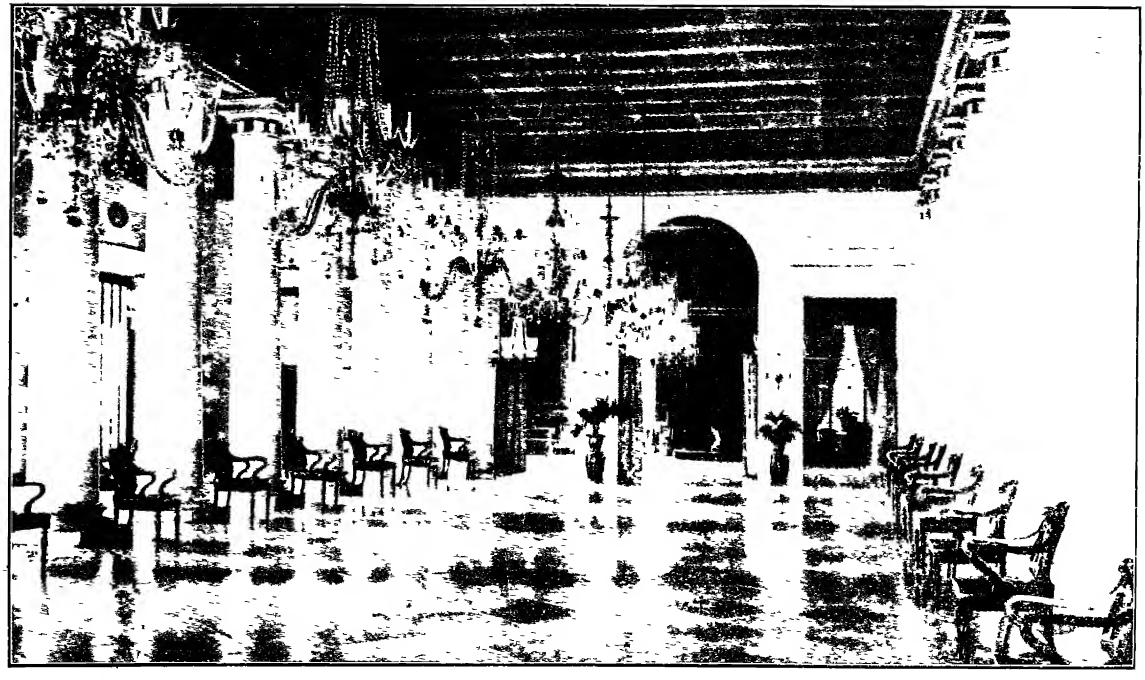


Photo by] Ball Room, Government House, Calcutta. [*Johnston & Hoffmann.*

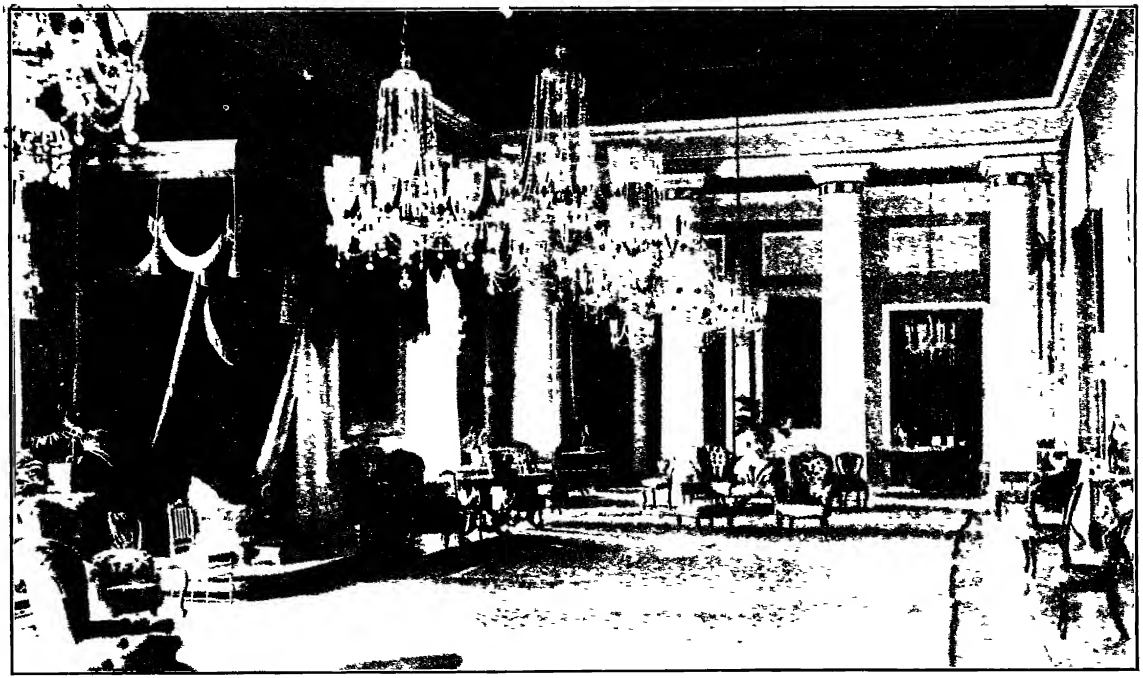


Photo. by] Throne Room, Government House, Calcutta. *[Johnston & Hoffmann*

of perfection. Dancing was generally kept up with spirit until 2 and 3 o'clock, and it was always very difficult to tear oneself away. For my own part I can safely say that some of the happiest and most enjoyable evenings of my life have been spent in the ball room of Government House. Amongst the numerous State functions that from time to time took place must be included durbars, investitures, and other official ceremonies, all of which were held either in the house or grounds excepting one and that was the *Durbar and Investiture of the Order of the "Star of India,"* held by Lord Northbrook, Viceroy of India, in honour of the late King Edward on the occasion of his visit to Calcutta as Prince of Wales in December-January, 1875-76. It was without exception the most gorgeous, magnificent, and impressive pageant ever witnessed in Calcutta. All the great Ruling Chiefs and Princes left their capitals to come to Calcutta to pay their homage and fealty to their future King-Emperor, amongst others the little lady known as the Begum of Bhopal, who, by reason of her great and unswerving loyalty and devotion to the British Raj in the dark days of the Mutiny, had earned for herself not only the lasting gratitude and respect of the Government of India as well as that of the Home Government, but a position second to none in all that great assemblage of Princes and Rulers in the Indian

Empire. Being a Purdahnashin she was of course closely veiled, and all that we were permitted to see was a diminutive figure, looking exactly like any ordinary up-country woman. The ceremony took place about 11 o'clock in the morning in a huge marquee or durbar tent, capable of accommodating any number of people, on a site in close proximity to the Ochterlony monument. It was enclosed within a high wall of canvas branching off the tent itself on either side for a considerable distance, leaving a long, broad, open roadway, and lined on both sides by a series of tiny robing tents for the use and convenience of the Knights who were to be newly invested at the ceremony. The enclosure was rounded off at the far end facing the north by a large gateway, at which those taking part in the ceremony were set down as they drew up in their carriages.

It was a sight never to be forgotten that gradually unfolded itself to view as the Knights in grand procession slowly moved up the avenue in solemn and dignified state to the accompaniment of the martial strains of the Royal Marine band playing a different march as each Chief appeared on the scene. They were all arrayed in the long flowing princely mantle and resplendent dress and appointments of the Insignia of the Order. Each Chief or Prince was attended by a small retinue of retainers, one

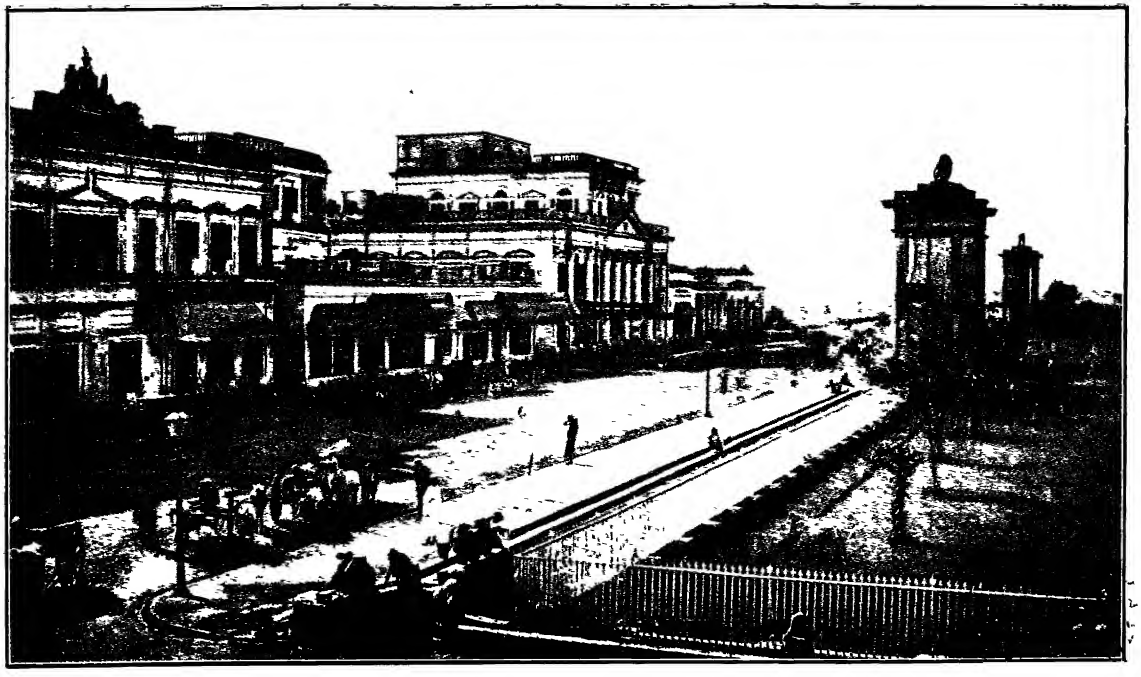


Photo. by] Old view of Government Place, East, showing gates of Government House. [*B & S*

Photo. by] **Present-day view of Government Place, East, and Old Court House Street** [*B & S.*

or two being armed and clad in barbaric garb of mediæval chain-mail armour, and also a standard bearer who unfurled his banner to the breeze over the head of his own individual Chieftain. As each Chief reached the marquee he was placed in order of precedence alongside the throne. Last of all, the Viceroy and Prince of Wales appeared, escorted by nearly the whole of the bodyguard accoutred in their bright and picturesque uniform, surrounded by a most brilliant and numerous staff of aides-de-camp and equerries (chobdahs heading the procession), and all the other State officials attached to the entourage of both the Viceroy and Prince. The ceremony which took a considerable time was conducted with all the viceregal pomp and circumstance usual on such occasions, and, as I have already remarked, has never at any time been equalled in grandeur and spectacular effect in the annals of Calcutta.

Cost of Living in Calcutta.

When I first arrived, everything was immeasurably cheaper than it is now, and it will no doubt surprise the young assistants in mercantile offices of the present day to hear that for the first year I received the sum of Rs. 200 per mensem and managed to live very comfortably on it. And when in the following year my salary was raised to Rs. 250

I could indulge in the luxury of a buggy and horse. I had a room in the best boarding house in Calcutta, in which lived young civilians or competition-wallahs as they were then styled, studying the languages prior to being drafted somewhere up-country, barristers, lawyers, merchants, and brokers. For this I paid Rs. 90 per month. My bearer, khit, and dhobi cost me a further Rs. 20—the two first Rs. 8 each and the latter Rs. 4. House-rent was ridiculously cheap in comparison with the rates of the present day. As far as I recollect, the biggest house in Chowringhee was obtainable for Rs. 400 or Rs. 450 at the outside. No. 3, Loudon Street, where my Burra Sahib then lived, was only Rs. 300 a month. A horse and syce cost about Rs. 25 a month to keep, and everything else in proportion. People were then very simple and inexpensive in their tastes. There was not, I think, the same inclination to spend money, and, as a matter of fact, there were not so many opportunities of doing so. For one thing, there were no theatres and other places of amusement, and trips home and even to the hills were few and far between. Ladies in those days thought nothing of staying with their husbands in Calcutta for several consecutive years, and yet they lived happily and contentedly through it all. To wind up the situation as regards expenses,

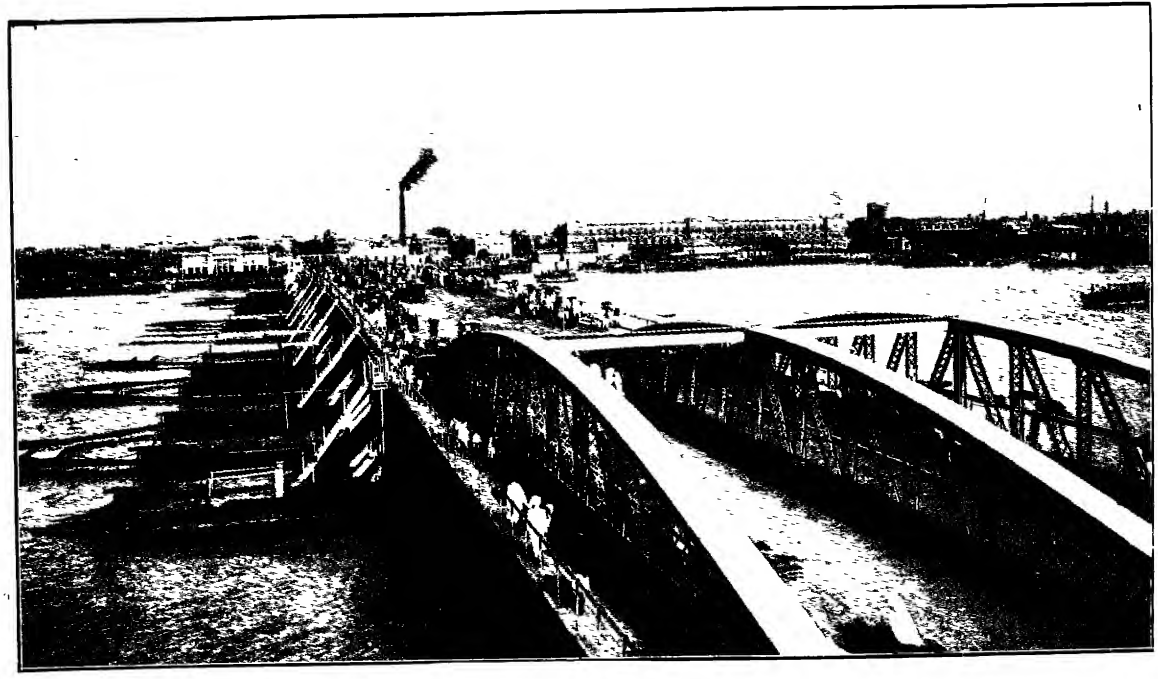


Photo. by] Howrah Bridge from Calcutta side. *[Johnston & Hoffmann.*

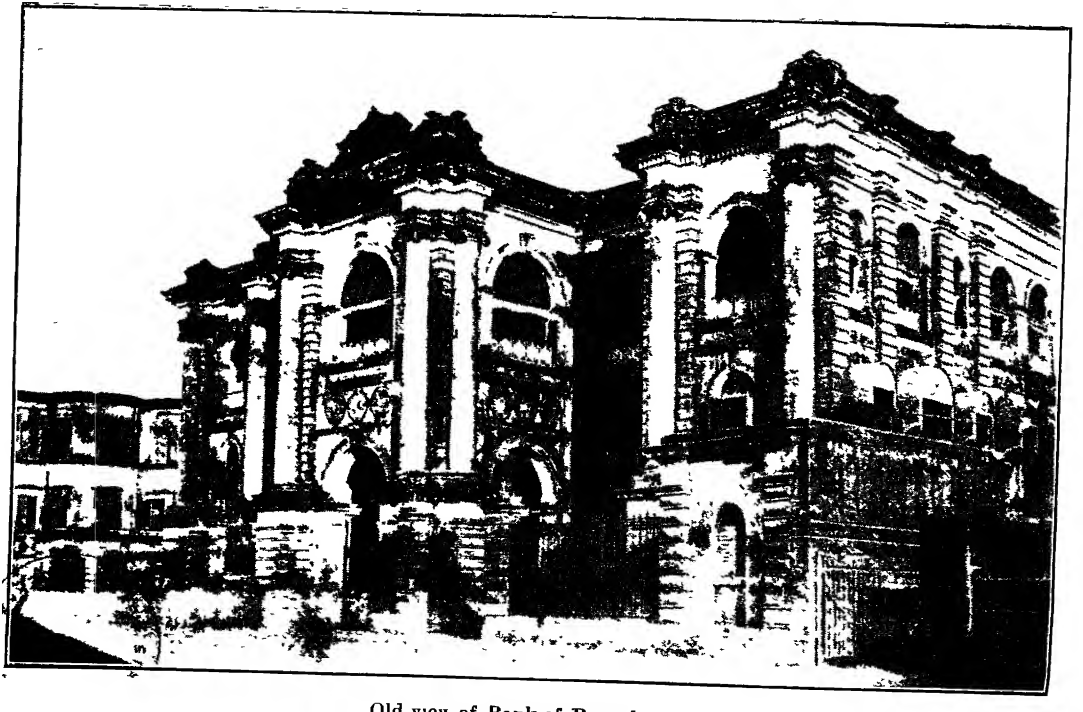
View of Harrison Road from Howrah Bridge.

I should say roundly that they are now about double what they were then.

Policy of Insurance.

I should just like to relate a little episode that occurred in my very early days in Calcutta, which nearly resulted disastrously for every one concerned. It will serve, amongst other things, to enlighten people of the present generation as to the wide difference that subsists between that time and the present in respect of the treatment of policy-holders generally by insurance companies. The firm with which I was then connected were agents of a Hongkong house, and one of our duties was to pay to the Universal Assurance Company, half-yearly, the premium on a policy on the life of a man who was staying in England. I forget exactly what the amount was, but I recollect it was something considerable. One fine day I was startled beyond measure by the receipt of a notice from the then agents, Gordon Stewart & Co., to the effect that the days of grace having expired for payment of the premium, the policy in question under the rules had lapsed and had been consequently cancelled. My feelings can be better imagined than described, as I alone was responsible, and I was fully aware of the gravity of the position. I made a clean breast of the state of affairs to my Burra Sahib, and he

instructed me to go straight over to the agents and explain matters, and at the same time authorised me to offer to pay anything they might see fit to impose in the nature of a fine. I got very little satisfaction or comfort from my interview with the head of the firm, a Mr. William Anderson whose soubriquet was Gorgeous Bill, who told me that he could do nothing personally, that the matter would have to be submitted to the directors at their next weekly meeting, and that the probabilities were that they would enforce the rule and cancel the policy. The following few days were a veritable nightmare to me, as I fully expected they would act as he intimated they would and as they were fully entitled to do. At last the fatal day arrived, and I waited in fear and trembling outside the Board room, whilst the directors deliberated over the affair. To my intense joy and relief they announced their decision which was to the effect that they had taken into consideration all the facts of the matter and they thought a fine would meet the exigencies of the case, but I must not do it again. As far as I remember the amount was Rs. 150, but the point of the story has yet to be told. Whilst all this was happening the man was lying dead at home having been accidentally killed by a bale of cotton falling upon him when passing along some cotton warehouses in one of the streets in Liverpool.



Old view of Bank of Bengal [*Johnston & Hoffmann*

Photo. by] Present view of Bank of Bengal *[Bourne & Shepherd.*

PART II.

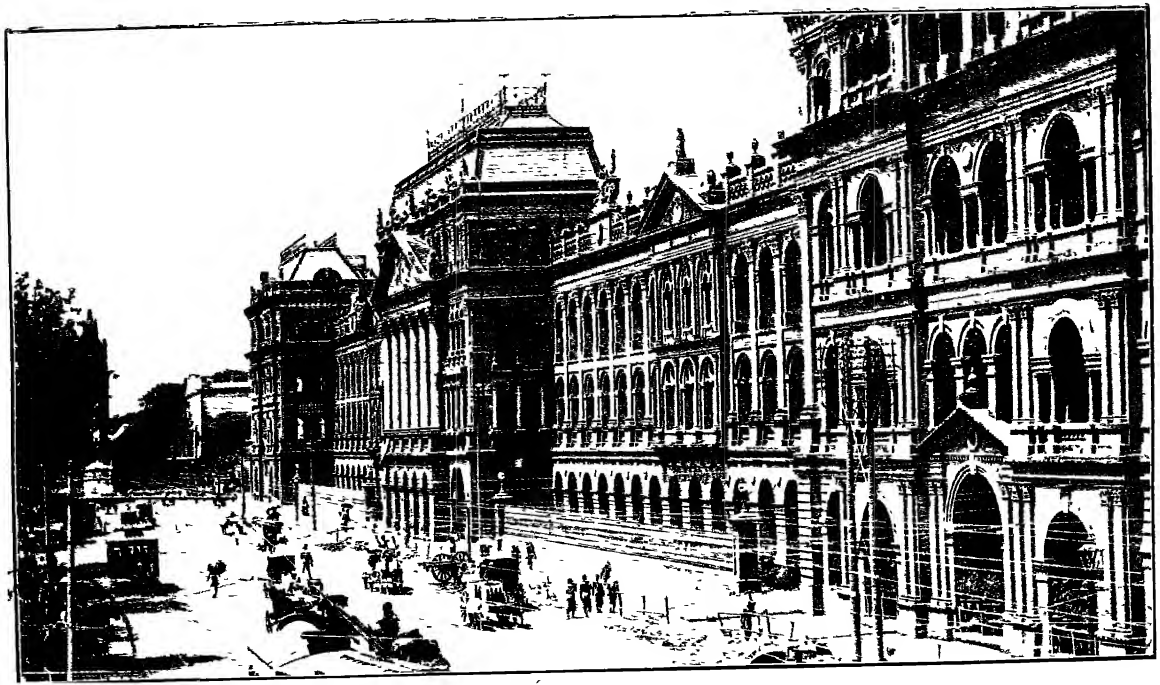
Topographical.

OF all the vast and dramatic changes that have taken place in Calcutta since I first saw it, I think the most striking and outstanding are to be seen in Clive Street and its environs. Looking back and contrasting the past with the present, it all seems so startling and wonderful as to suggest the idea that some genii or magician had descended upon the city and with a touch of his magic wand converted a very ordinary looking street, containing many mean, dilapidated looking dwellings, into a veritable avenue of palaces, and for ever sweeping away blots and eyesores which had existed almost from time immemorial. This transformation more or less applies to Clive Row, the whole of the south side of Clive Ghaut Street stretching round the corner into the south of the Strand, part of the northern portion, Royal Exchange Place, Fairlie Place, the west and south side of Dalhousie Square, and a goodly portion to the east.

Writers' Buildings

Occupying as it does the whole of the north side of Dalhousie Square has been changed and

altered out of all knowledge and recognition. It was formerly, before Government took it over, a plain white stuccoed building utterly devoid of any pretensions to architectural beauty, and depending mainly for any chance claim to recognition on its immense length. Its blank, straight up and down appearance was barely relieved by several white pillars standing out rather prominently in the centre of the building. It used to be occupied by shops and all sorts of people, merchants, private residents, etc. etc. Some of the rooms on the ground floor were let out as godowns. I lived there myself for some months on my first arrival in Calcutta, and very pleasant and airy quarters I found them. I recollect in the early morning quite a number of small green paroquets used to fly all about the place, and their incessant chatter and calls to each other made it very bright and cheery. My rooms were on the top floor at the extreme west end, next to where the Council chamber is now situated. I also had in addition a very good dining room on the first floor. When the Bengal Government acquired the property they erected an entirely new facade of a totally different design from the original, built the present long range of verandahs and Council chamber which they completed in 1881-1882, and also threw out from the main block from time to time the various annexes that we see abutting on to



Frontage of Writers' Buildings from East to West. [*Johnston & Hoffmann*

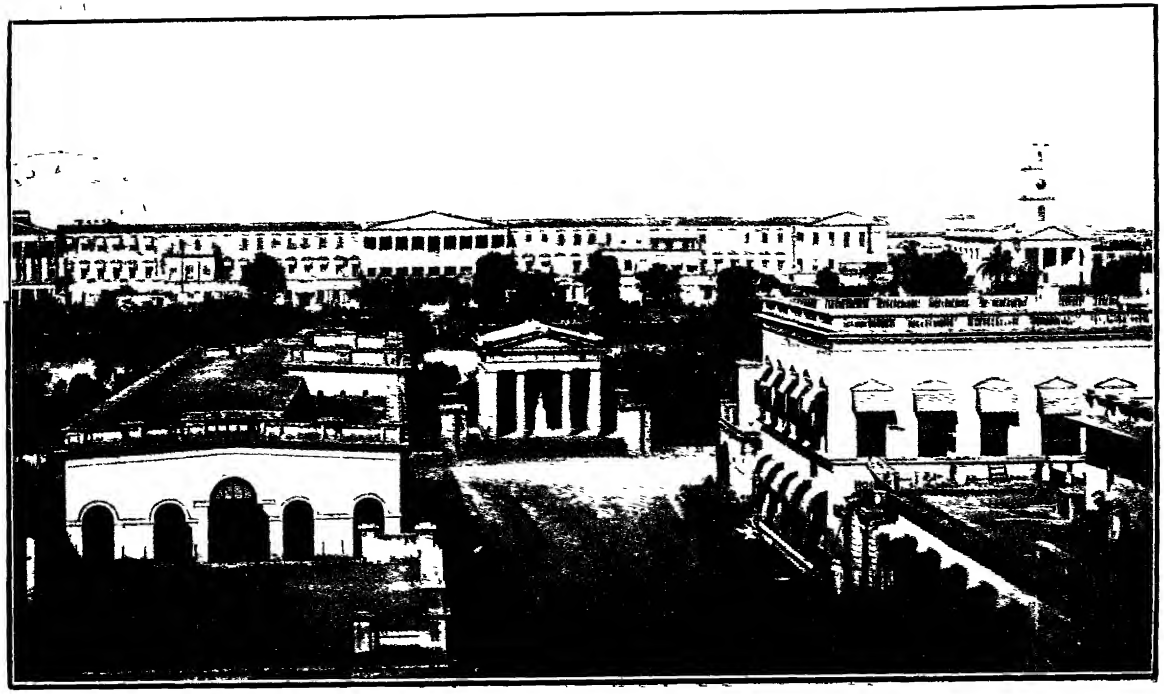


Photo. by] Distant view of Writers' Buildings, taken before the Dalhousie Institute was built. [*J & H.*

Lyons Range. Of course most of us know that Writers' Buildings in the days of Clive and Warren Hastings was the home and resting place of the young civilians on their first arrival in Calcutta, and who were then designated Writers, from which fact there appears little doubt the place derives its name.

One of the very earliest street alterations and improvements that comes to my recollection was in Canning Street, just at the junction of Clive Row, on the space of ground extending from the latter for some distance to the east, and north as far as the boundary wall of Andrew Yule & Co.'s offices, leaving but a narrow strip of a lane running parallel to the latter and affording access to China Bazaar on the east and beyond. When I first came to Calcutta this space was occupied by a very mediæval, ancient, and old-fashioned building having a flagged, paved courtyard in front, surrounded by high brick walls. It divided Canning Street into two distinct sections, effectually obstructing through communication between east and west, except for the narrow strip of passage above referred to. The place was then known as it is at the present day as Aloe Godown or Potato Bazaar, and was in the occupation of George Henderson & Co. as an office when they were agents of the Borneo Jute Co., afterwards converted into the Barnagore Jute Co. When

it was pulled down, it of course opened out free communication between east and west and allowed of the erection of the buildings we see on the north and south of the eastern portion. Whilst on this subject I must confess to a lapse of memory in respect of what Clive Row was like at that particular period. I am half inclined to the belief that it did not exist as an ordinary thoroughfare and had no houses on it; also that more or less it was filled up by the compounds of the various houses situated on the western side of China Bazaar. At the same time, however, it may have given access of very restricted dimensions to the north and west of Aloe Godown, but the entrance which we always used was the gateway in Canning Street facing due west.

The next improvement, that I recollect, this time in connection with the building of new business premises, was when Jardine Skinner & Co. vacated their old offices which were situated on the site of Anderson Wright & Co.'s and Kettlewell Bullen & Co.'s present offices, and removed to their present very handsome quarters which they have for so long occupied. I very well recollect the style of their old place of business and how the exterior strongly reminded me of the cotton warehouses in Liverpool. The interior was a big, rambling, ramshackle kind of a place with but few pretensions to being an office such as we see at the present day. The whole

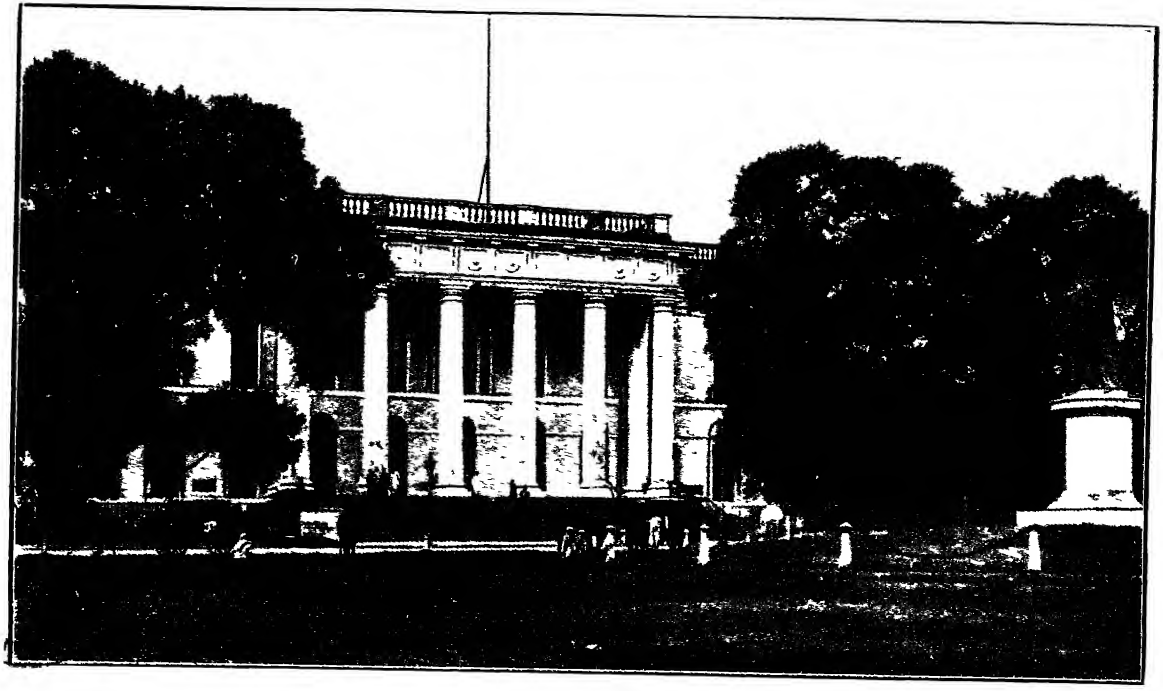


Photo. by] **Town Hall, Calcutta.** *[Bourne & Shepherd.*

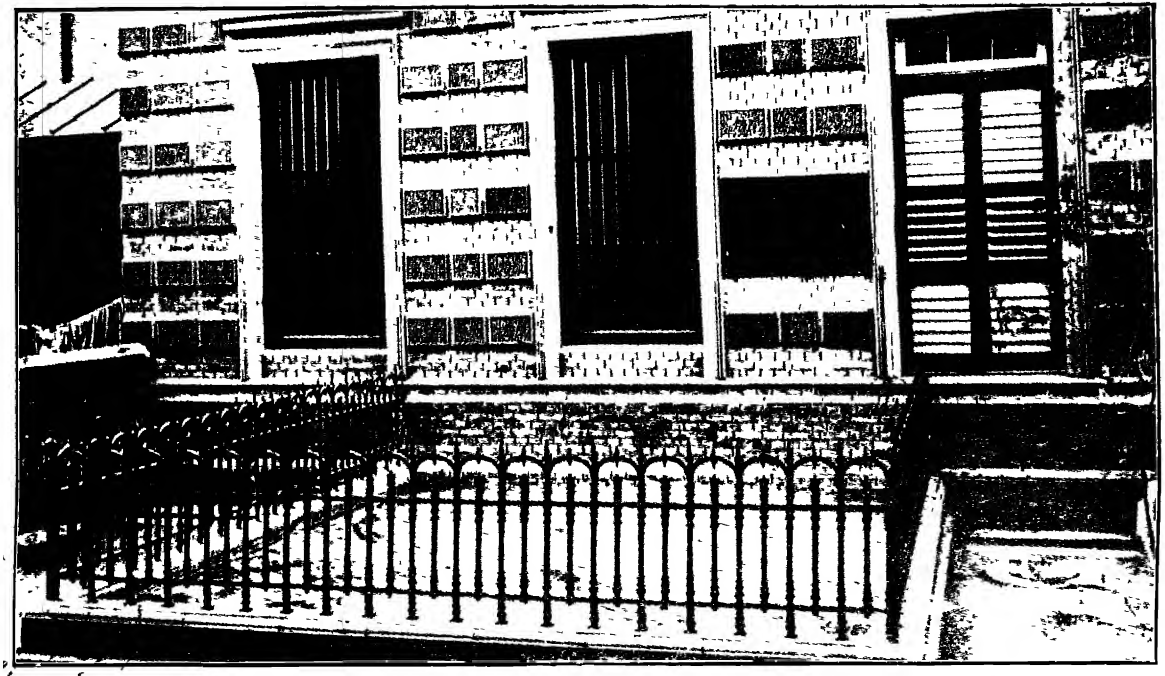


Photo. by] Site of Black Hole of Calcutta [*Bourne & Shepherd*

was of course eventually pulled down, as was also a similar range of buildings in the south of Clive Ghaut Street on which Macneill & Co.'s offices were built.

It has just occurred to me whilst writing that it might perhaps be a matter of some interest to brokers and others engaged in business at the present time to be informed of the various changes that have taken place during the last forty or fifty years in the location of the offices of many of the firms with whom they have daily intercourse. Those to whom it does not appeal can skip the next few pages.

To begin with, George Henderson & Co. were the first to remove their offices after their old premises in Aloe Godown were dismantled. They first of all migrated to 3, Fairlie Place, and after many years to 25, Mangoe Lane, now in the occupation of Lyall Marshall & Co. and Lovelock & Lewes. They finally settled down in their present offices in Clive Street which they have greatly improved and enlarged.

The next firm on the list to make a change of quarters was Jardine Skinner & Co., to whom I have previously alluded.

Macneill & Co., who had branched off from the firm of Begg Dunlop & Co., had their first offices in the building now in the occupation of the Exchange Gazette Printing Office and Mackenzie Lyall & Co.'s Furniture Range; afterwards they

removed to the Strand at the north-west corner of Canning Street, and then established themselves in their present premises to which they have made considerable additions and improvements.

Kettlewell Bullen & Co. have had many flittings since I first became acquainted with them. My first recollection of them was when they occupied a very old building, 5, New China Bazaar Street, which has been pulled down, and on the site of which have been erected the premises containing the Bristol Grill on the ground floor and several offices on the upper storeys. They then removed to 19 and 22, Strand, then back again to 5, New China Bazaar Street, afterwards to 5, Mission Row, finally settling down in their present quarters which they have greatly improved and largely extended.

Petrocochino Bros. had their offices originally on the site of the Stock and Share Exchange and Ewing & Co.'s premises. They afterwards moved over to Canning Street at the south-east corner of China Bazaar, now occupied by Agelasto & Co., finally settling down in their present quarters in Clive Ghaut Street.

Duncan Brothers & Co., or Playfair Duncan & Co. as they were known in the far off days, were established at 14, Clive Street. From there they changed over to next door in Canning Street which had formerly been occupied by

Photo by

Old Court House Street, looking south. [*Johnston & Hoffmann*

Photo. by] **Government Place, East, at the present day.** *[Bourne & Shepherd*

Finlay Muir & Co., and thence, as we all know, to the very handsome block of buildings which they have erected on the site of Gladstone Wyllie & Co.'s old offices.

Ernsthausen & Co., or Ernsthausen & Oesterly as they were originally styled in the days when I first knew them, had their offices in Strand Road to the south of Commercial Buildings, now incorporated with the premises of Mackinnon, Mackenzie & Co. Subsequently they removed to Royal Exchange Place, where they remained for a number of years, in a building formerly occupied by a very well known firm of Greek merchants of the name of Schilizzi & Co., and now by Prankissen Law & Co. They then went to a building next to Jardine Skinner & Co. to the south, which some time before had been newly erected, but which has since been pulled down to make room for the handsome premises of the Oriental Government Security Life Assurance Co., Ltd. They finally came to anchor in their present location.

When Birkmyre Bros first established themselves here under the management of Sir Archy Birkmyre's uncle, with Mr. Patterson as assistant, who later on took charge of the Hooghly Mills, and finally of Jardine Skinner & Co.'s two mills, they occupied rooms on the first floor of 23 or 24, Strand Road, North. It was here I negotiated with them the very first contract that

was ever passed in Calcutta for hessian cloth for shipment to America. I forget how long they remained there until they removed to their present offices. I may here mention that they first of all commenced operations with the machinery of an old mill which they had been running at home for some time previously, and which they shipped out stock and block to Calcutta, and erected on the site of the present Hastings Mill.

Graham & Co., on their first arrival in Calcutta, occupied 14, Old Court House Lane, and afterwards removed to 9, Clive Street, which, as we all know, was pulled down a few years ago, and the present palatial premises erected on its site.

F. W. Heilgers & Co., in the far distant past, were known as Wattenbach Heilgers & Co. When I first remember them they had their offices in an old building occupying the site of Balmer Lawrie & Co.'s handsome new premises, after which they removed to 136, Canning Street, where they remained for a very great number of years, until the Chartered Bank of India, etc., built their present offices when they took over and rented the whole of the second floor.

Bird & Co. were originally located at 40, Strand Road, North, a very ancient and out-of-date looking sort of a place. Their first removal was to 5, Clive Row, where they stayed until

101-1, Clive Street was erected, to which they changed finally establishing themselves on the first and part of the ground floor of the Chartered Bank Buildings on their completion some nine years ago.

James Finlay & Co., formerly Finlay Muir & Co., started in 15, Clive Row, and stayed there for a number of years, after which they removed to 21, Canning Street, and thence to their present handsome block of buildings which they erected on the site of the old "Thieves Bazaar," and a portion of the adjoining ground to the east and south.

William Moran & Co.'s old indigo and silk mart was situated on the site of the present Stamp and Stationery Office, and, as far as I recollect, extended from Church Lane to the Strand. When the ground was required by Government they built premises in Mangoe Lane, now in the occupation of Steuart & Co., the coach-builders, the Pneumatic Dunlop Tyre Co., and various other people. When misfortune overtook them, the property was, I believe, sold, and they removed to 11, Lall Bazaar Street, which has since been dismantled, and they are now in 2, Mangoe Lane, next door but one to their former premises.

Hoare Miller & Co. have only made two removals during their very long residence in Calcutta. First to the office in the Strand which they have lately vacated for their present offices

in Fairlie Place, next to the National Bank. They formerly had their offices at the extreme west end of Writers' Buildings, just under my old quarters, and to the west facing the Custom House there was a large open space adjoining, which, as far as I recollect, they utilised for storing iron, metals and other goods of a like nature, and on which the Council chamber was eventually built.

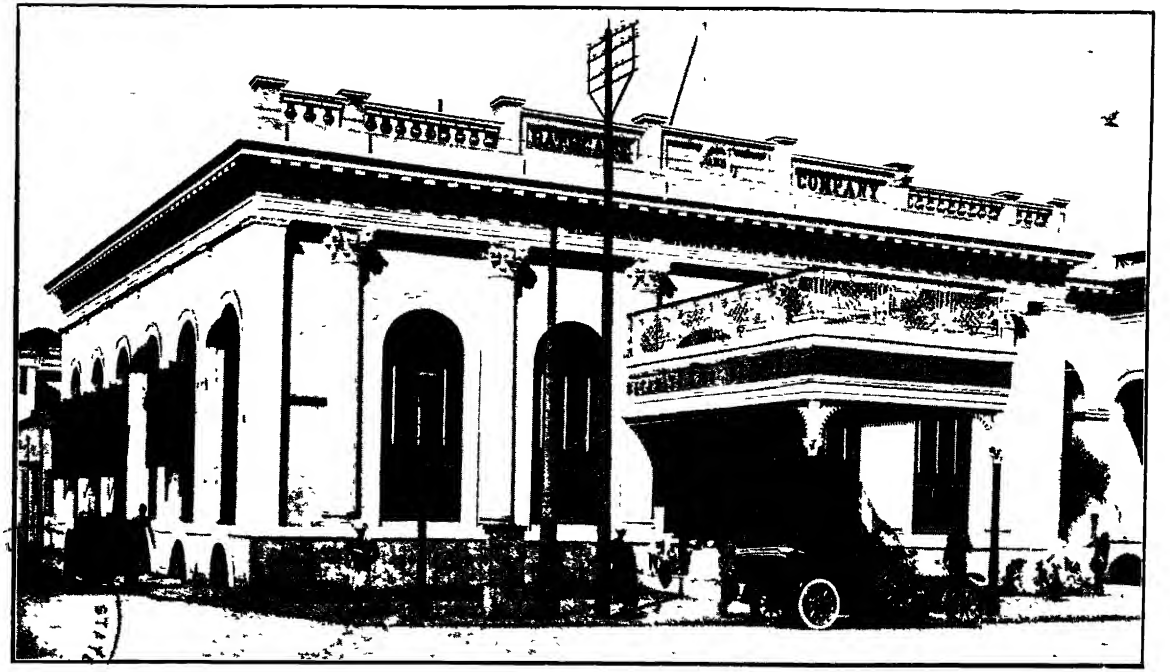
Ralli Bros. have also made but one change in all the long years they have been established here, from 9, Clive Row to their present offices, which they greatly improved and enlarged on entering into possession.

Anderson Wright & Co. opened their first office at 12, Clive Row, but, as far as I can recollect, they did not stay there very long before they removed to their present place of business.

Andrew Yule & Co. were established for very many years, as most of us already know, at 8, Clive Row, and they also occupied a considerable portion of the adjoining premises extending along Canning Street. They simply stepped across the way and built themselves the splendid new block of buildings which they now occupy.

I think these embrace most of the important changes I remember. I will therefore close this branch of my recollections.

Before finally quitting the subject relating to business matters the following may interest



[Photo by] Bathgate & Co 's premises, Old Court House Street [*Johnston & Hoffmann.*

Grosvenor House.
Containing Phelps & Co's. and James Monteith & Co's., premises.

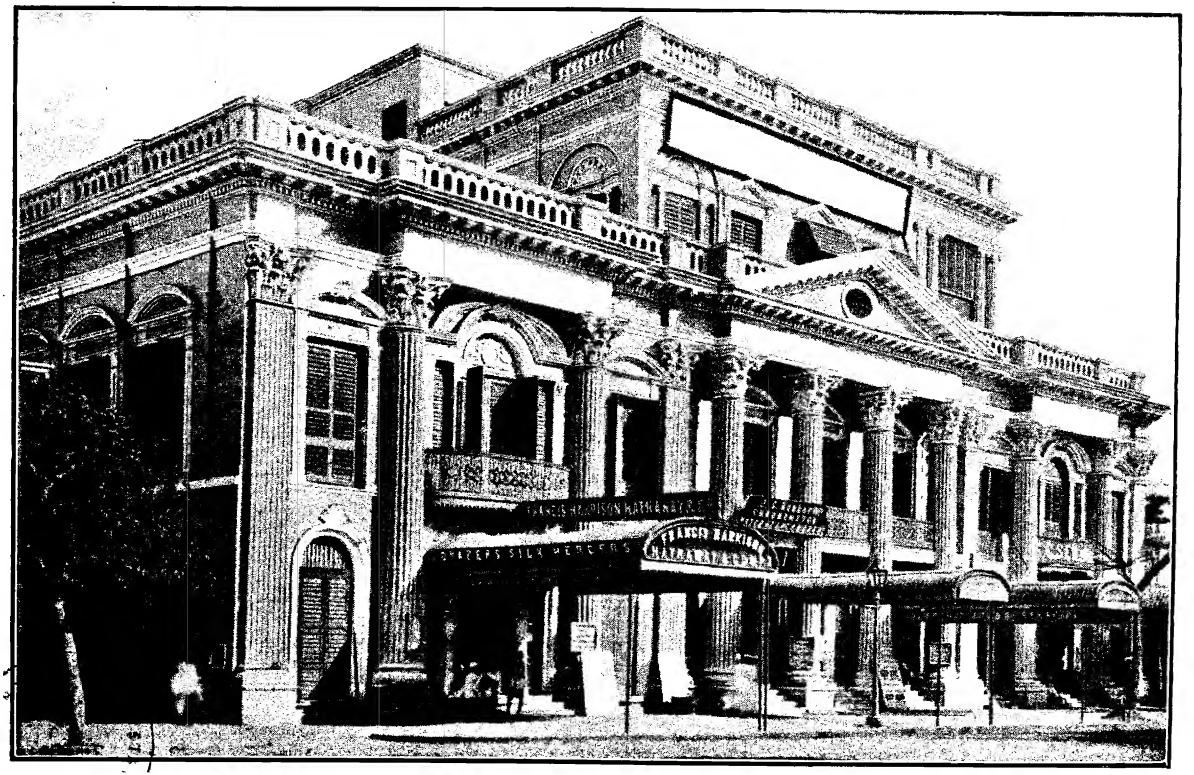
a good many people, more particularly those engaged in the jute trade: When the jute baling industry was first started, and for many years afterwards, it was carried on principally in the very heart of the city, in Canning Street, and various streets and lanes, branching off and in the neighbourhood, such as Sukea's Lane, Bonfield Lane, Jackson Ghaut Street, and many other back slums, some of which have altogether disappeared to make room for street, and other structural improvements. There were no hydraulic presses in those days for the baling of jute, and the work had to be done by hand screws worked from the upper floor, on the same principle as the capstan of a sailing vessel, by gangs of coolies in old, tumble-down and dilapidated godowns. The jute was compressed into bales weighing 300 lbs. only, and it was not until the advent of the hydraulic presses in the seventies that bales containing first of all 350 and later 400 lbs. were shipped from Calcutta, and the baling was transferred from the town to Chitpore and the other side of the Canal. To illustrate another phase of the vast changes that have taken place, in this instance in the matter of exports, I very well remember F. W. Heilgers & Co., who happened one year to be the largest exporters, advertising the fact by printing a list of the various shippers and their shipments, with their own name at the head in larger type than

that of the other firms, with a total of 120,000 or 130,000 bales ! ! !

In comparison with this, and just to contrast it with what was then considered a large export for one individual firm, I may mention that just before the present war Ralli Bros. exported 1,100,000 bales, Becker Grey & Co., 400,000 bales, Ernsthausen & Co. 330,000 bales, R. Steel & Co. 240,000 bales, and James Duffus & Co. 220,000 bales.

The Ice House.

It was not until the year 1878 that ice factories were first established in Calcutta when the Bengal Ice Company was formed under the auspices of Geo. Henderson & Co., followed in 1882 by the Crystal Ice Company, of which for a time I was a director, by Balmer Lawrie & Co. It was not long after the starting of the latter concern that the rivalry between the two companies became so keen and ruinous, involving as it did the cutting down of rates, that it was found impossible to continue. Unless something had been done the fight would have ended very much like the proverbial one of the Kilkenny cats. Before, however, this stage was reached, the agents and directors of both companies very wisely entered into negotiations with each other with the view of effecting a compromise, which later eventuated in their amalgamation under



Old premises of Francis, Harrison, Hathaway & Co., Government Place, East.

New premises of Francis, Harrison, Hathaway & Co., Government Place, East

Photo. by] Peliti's premises, Government Place, East. [*Johnston & Hoffmann.*

Photo. by] Dalhousie Square, looking north-east, showing tank [*Johnston & Hoffmann.*

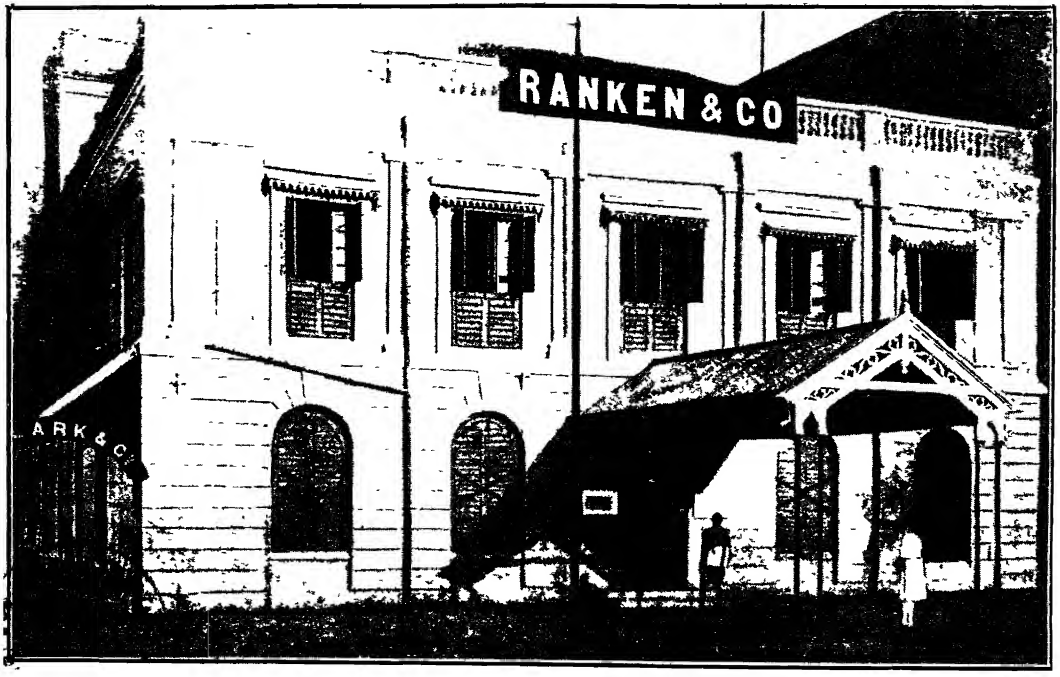
the style of the present Calcutta Ice Association, Ltd. Before the introduction of artificial ice, Calcutta was entirely dependent for its supply on the importation of Wenham Lake ice in wooden sailing ships by the Tudor Ice Company from America. The Ice House was situated at the west end of the Small Cause Court, the entrance facing Church Lane and approached by a steep flight of stone-steps. There were no depôts distributed about the town as there are now, and every one had to send a coolie to the Ice House for his daily supply with a blanket in which it was always wrapped up.

I think the price in ordinary times was two annas per seer, but it occasionally happened that the vessels bringing the ice, owing to contrary winds or some other cause, were delayed, and then the stock ran low and we were put on short commons; if as in some cases the delay became very protracted, the quantity allowed to each individual was gradually reduced to one seer per diem, and if any one wanted more he had to produce a doctor's certificate because it was of course imperatively necessary that sufficient should be kept in reserve for the use of the various hospitals. When the long-delayed vessel's arrival was telegraphed from Saugor, great was the rejoicing of the inhabitants. The vessels used to be moored at the ghaut at the bottom of Hare Street, as there were no jetties in those days.

The ice was landed in great blocks on the heads of coolies and slided down from the top of the steps to the vaults below. They used at the same time to bring American apples which were greatly appreciated as there were none grown in India at that time.

Illuminants.

To the present generation it would no doubt appear strange and particularly inconvenient had they to rely solely for their lighting power on coconut oil. It had many drawbacks, two of which, and not the least, being the great temptation it afforded Gungadeen, the Hindu farash bearer, to annex for his own individual daily requirements a certain percentage of his master's supply, and to the delay in lighting the lamps in the cold weather owing to the congealment of the oil which had to undergo a process of thawing before it could be used. Gas had been introduced some years previously, but it was confined to the lighting of the streets and public buildings. Of the days that I am writing about, and for long years afterwards, coconut oil was the one and only source from which we derived our artificial lighting, and it was not until the early seventies that a change came over the spirit of the dream by the introduction of kerosine oil. This of course made a most wonderful and striking change in the economy



Photo, by [illegible]

Old premises of Ranken & Co. [*Johnston & Hoffmann.*

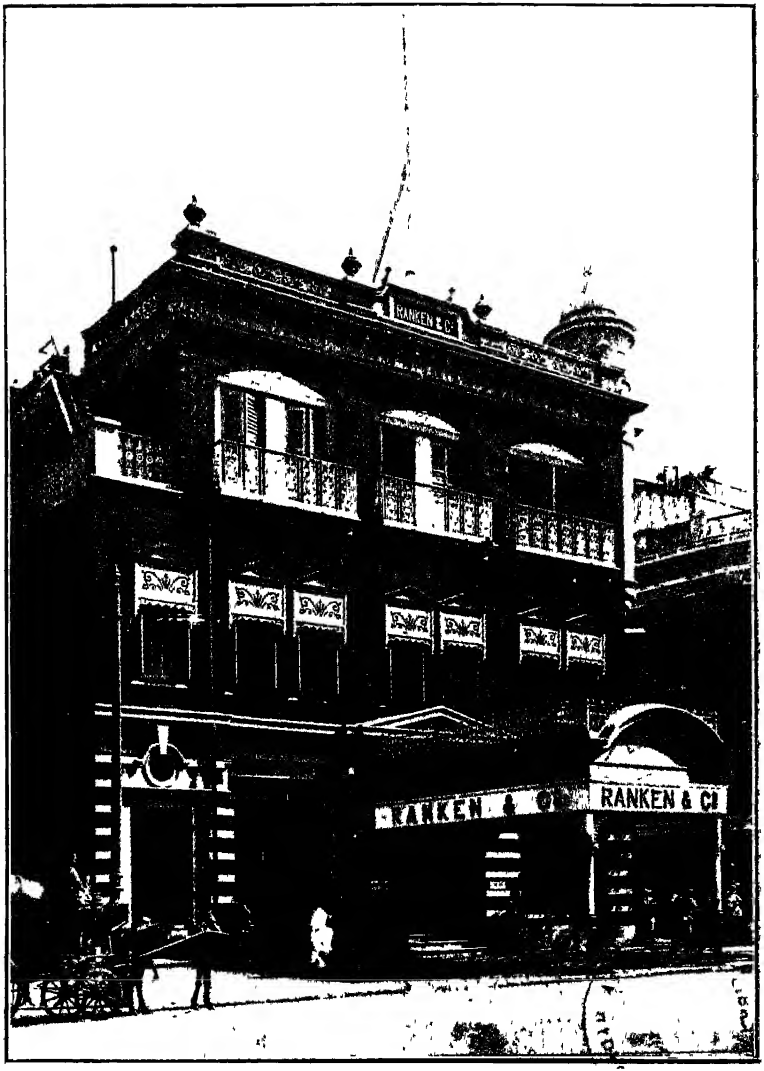


Photo. by] **Present premises of Ranken & Co.**

of life in more ways than one, and amongst others it brought about at once and for ever the abdication of the tyrannical sway and cessation of the depredations of the aforesaid Gungadeen who had no use for kerosine as a substitute for his beloved coconut oil wherewith to anoint his body and for the other various uses to which he could apply it.

Electric Lights.

Although this did not come into general vogue until the late nineties, it had been introduced in a very practical way as far back as the year 1881 in the Howrah Jute Mills Co., but after a few years it was discontinued, to be generally re-adopted in 1895 by all the jute mills. The introduction of the light into private dwellings, places of amusement, and other buildings, of course worked a marvellous change in our social life and all its conditions, but it appealed most of all to those who like myself had for so many years sat in a species of outer darkness and made it almost seem as if the past had been but a dream.

Punkahs and Electric Fans.

The old, swinging punkah, with which most of us are so familiar, held on its silent way in spite of occasional attempts from time to time to oust it from its well and firmly established

position. The different inventions that made their appearance always lacked the one essential point of giving expression to the kick or jerk of the hand-pulled punkah, and consequently they proved unsuccessful. I doubt much whether it would ever have been possible to create an artificial substitute for this most essential and necessary adjunct. But the advent of the electric fan also in the latter end of the nineties of course did away with the necessity for any further essays in this direction. And so at last after innumerable years of abuse but useful and indispensable work, the old punkah went the way of all things mundane.

The Howrah Bridge

Was designed and built by Sir Bradford Leslie in 1874, and proved from the very first an inestimable boon to the inhabitants, both of Calcutta and Howrah. It is very difficult for any one who has never had the experience of doing without it, as I have, to conceive what it was like before the bridge was built. If you wanted to cross the river except at stated intervals when the ferry-boat was plying, you had of course to go either in a dinghy or green-boat, and accidents were of frequent occurrence, particularly amongst the native element, in the rainy season, when, as we all know, the freshets are exceptionally strong. Goods and all sorts of merchandise had to be

transported to and fro by cargo-boats and lighters which entailed much delay, besides extra expenses, loss, and damage to the goods by changing hands so often in transit. When the bridge was first opened a small toll was levied for each person crossing over. After a time Railway terminal charges were levied and appropriations from the revenue of the port commissioners allocated to support the upkeep of the bridge, and tolls were abolished.

The Jubilee Bridge

Was also designed and built by Sir Bradford Leslie in 1887, and although it does not bulk so largely in the public eye as the Howrah Bridge, it is none the less a work of immense value. In addition to many other advantages it ensures by linking together the two railways, the East Indian and Eastern Bengal, an uninterrupted and continuous flow of an enormous amount of goods traffic from all parts of India direct to the docks and alongside vessels waiting for cargo. Its great importance and utility would have been further and greatly enhanced had Government carried into effect the proposed and long-talked-of scheme of a central station, the site of which, as far as I recollect, was to have been to the north-east of Bentinck Street taking in a portion of Bow Bazaar Street adjoining, and, extending in a northerly direction, parallel to Lower Chitpore

Road. Of course all passenger traffic would have centred there, and every one, leaving for home or up-country, would have driven to the new station, and so have avoided the long unpleasant drive over the bridge to Howrah on the one side and to Sealdah on the other. But like many another proposed scheme that I have heard of in my time in Calcutta it unfortunately all ended in smoke.

H. M.'s Courts of Judicature.

Looking back to the time when Warren Hastings ruled over the destinies of Bengal, there were then established in Calcutta two courts, the Supreme Court of Judicature situated on the site of the present High Court, and the Sudder Audalat or Appellate Court which was located in the building at the corner of Bhowanipur Road opposite the Medical Officers' Quarters which has since been converted into a Hospital for European Soldiers. These courts were still in existence when I arrived in Calcutta. The Supreme Court was ruled over by the Chief Justice, assisted by two Puisne Judges appointed by the Government at Home, who tried all criminal cases as well as civil suits on the original side. The court house was a two-storeyed, white stuccoed building, having much the same kind of appearance as a good-sized private dwelling with a long verandah running the whole length of the south side facing the

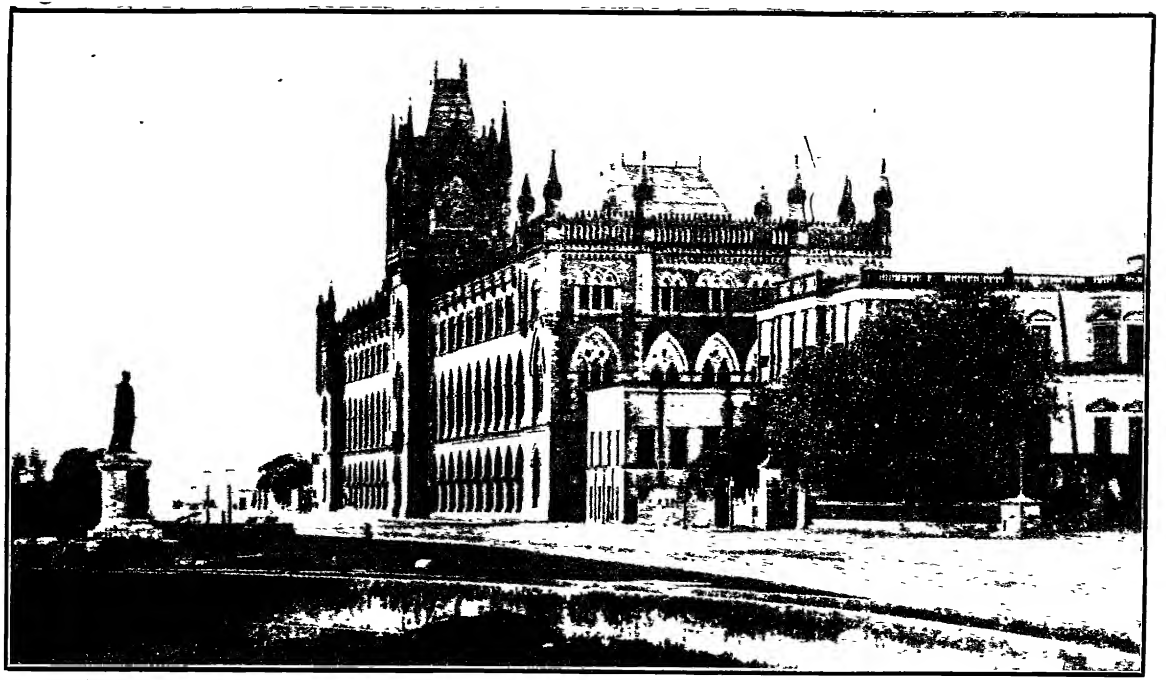
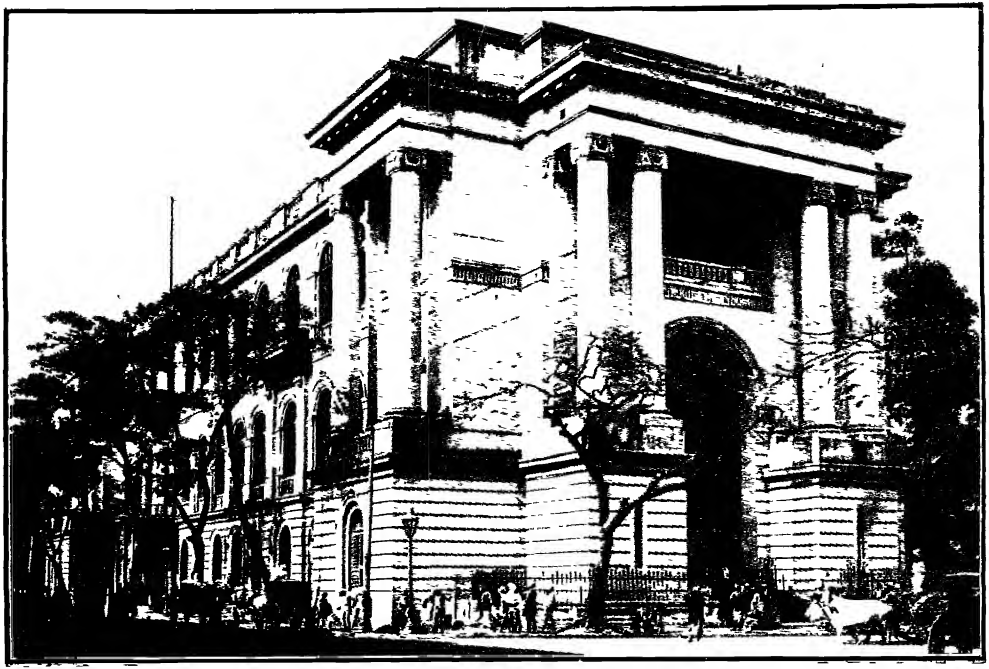


Photo. by] High Court, erected 1872. *[Johnston & Hoffmann.*



Small Cause Court

maidan, supported by rather a conspicuous looking row of white pillars. The Sudder Audalat was a Court of Appeal for cases sent up from the mofussil, and all the Judges were members of the Indian Civil Service recruited from time to time from the various collectorates in Bengal. When the High Court came into existence in the early sixties the former mentioned court ceased to exist, and automatically became merged into the latter.

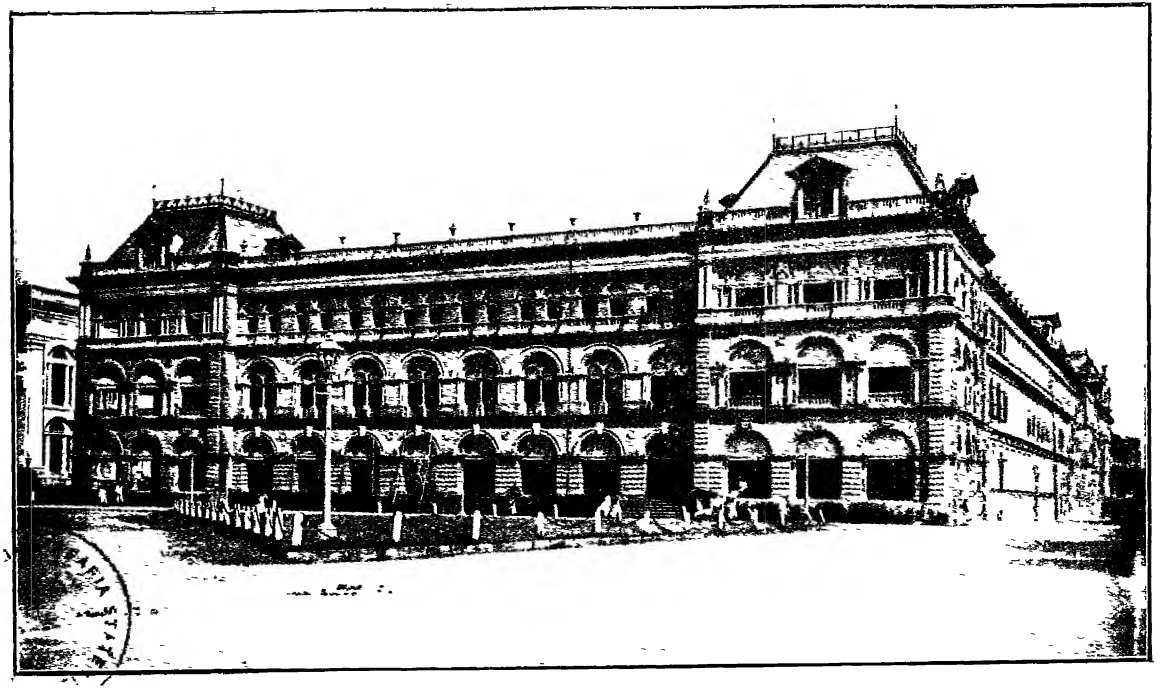
The Small Cause Court.

This court was originally housed for many years in the large, white building in the Museum compound to the north-east, close to the Sudder Street entrance, and now in the occupation of the Director of the Zoological Survey of India. It was enclosed by a high brick-wall having an entrance on Chowringhee Road through a large gateway, supported by two upstanding pillars. There used to be only three Judges, First or Chief, Second, and Third, and I recollect some time after my arrival in Calcutta one of the first incumbents of the office of the Chief Judge was the late Mr. J. T. Woodroffe, Advocate-General of Bengal, and father of Sir J. G. Woodroffe, Judge of the High Court. He would, however, only accept the appointment temporarily, as he considered his future prospects at the Bar too good to jeopardise by being absent beyond a

certain time. I was very intimate with him at that period; in fact, we lived in the same boarding house for quite a long time in Middleton Row, now run by Mrs. Ashworth, and it is rather a singular coincidence that when this lady was a little girl her mother, Mrs. Shallow, presided over this very house. The present court was built on the site of the old post office and the residence of the Calcutta Postmaster, a Mr. Dove—a large, fat man, but one of the best. As Calcutta grew and litigation increased the number of Judges was also gradually increased until there are now, I believe, six and a Registrar to do the work that three, formerly, were able to cope with.

Police Courts.

The Chief Presidency Magistrate has lately changed his court from Lall Bazaar to Bankshall Street, formerly occupied from time immemorial by the Board of Revenue. Originally there were only two Magistrates sitting on the Bench, the Chief, a European barrister designated the Southern, and a native known as the Northern, Magistrate. The courts were formerly held in the large, white building in the centre of the Police compound, since pulled down, on the top floor of which the Commissioner of Police for a long time resided. It was found at last, as in the case of the Small Cause Court, that the increased work had outrun the existing accommodation; so



Treasury and Imperial Secretariat Building at the present time.

Photo. by] Department of Commerce and Industry, Council House Street, built on site of Old Foreign Office. *[J. & H*

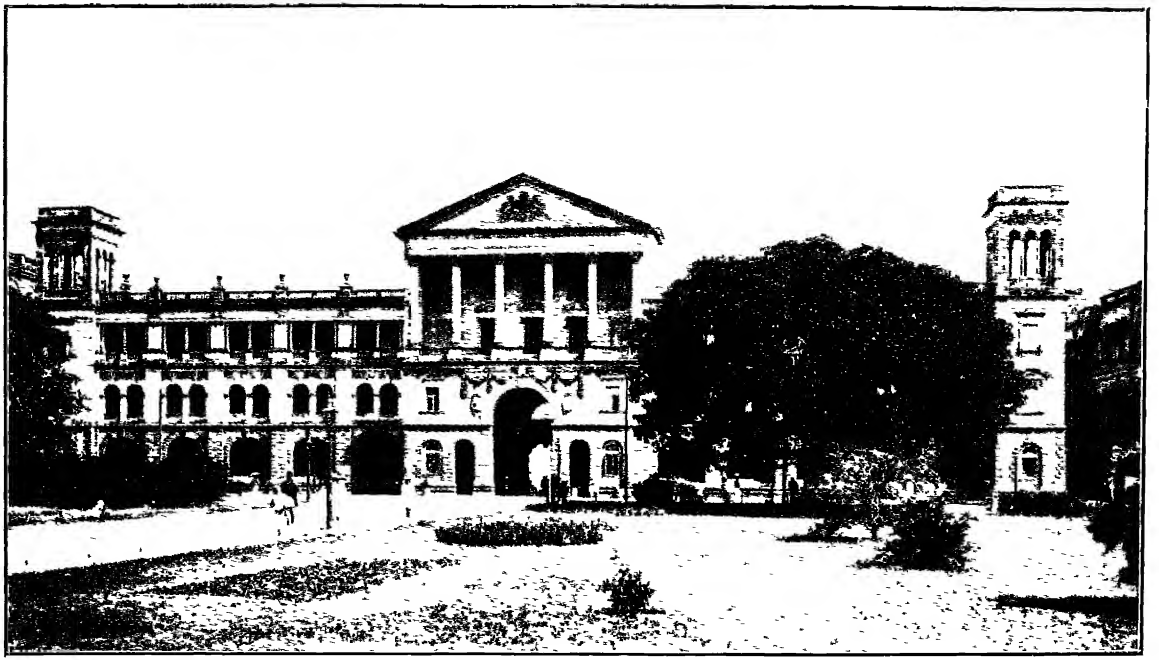


Photo. by] Foreign and Military Secretariat, built on the site of the "Belatee Bungalow" [*B. & S.*

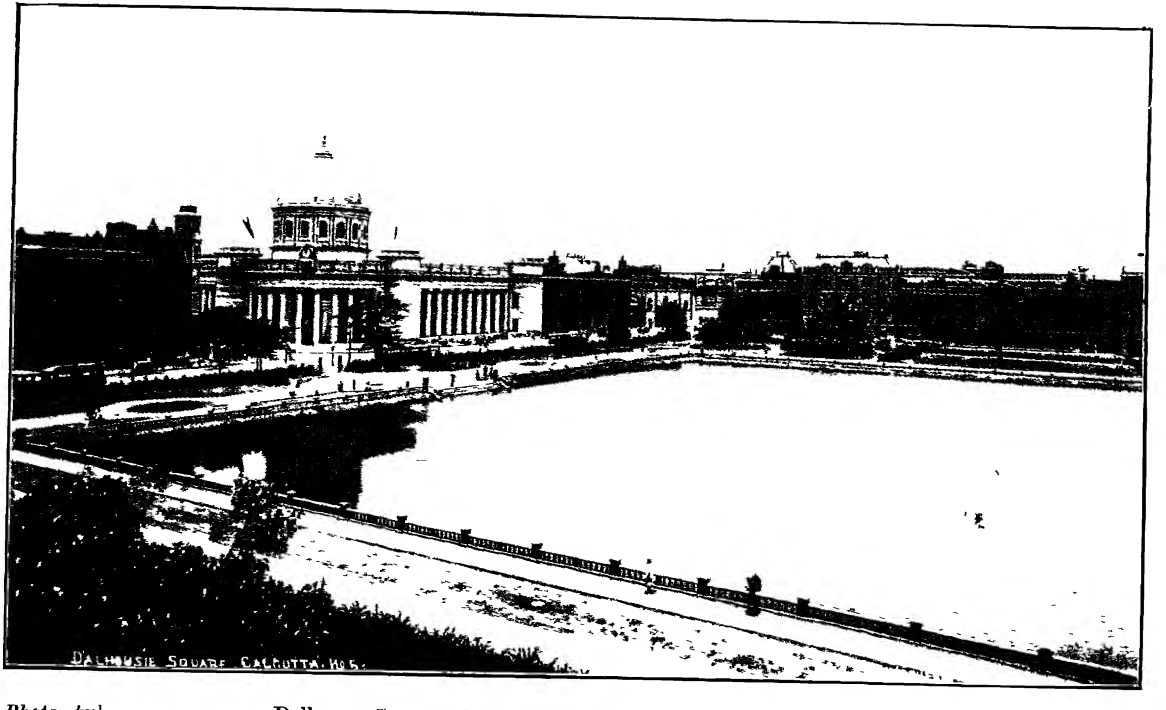


Photo. by] Dalhousie Square, showing Post Office and Writers' Buildings. [*Bourne & Shepherd.*

Government built the police court on the site of the old Sailors' Home which has lately been vacated and found the Commissioner of Police a handsome residence standing on the site of the premises of the United Service Club. My friend, Willie Bonnaud, the present popular Clerk of the Crown, held for some time the responsible position of Chief Presidency Magistrate, and by his considerate and courteous manners, combined with the able manner in which he discharged the duties of his office, won the approval and respect of Government as well as of the public, both European and native. He only vacated the appointment on account of the age-limit and because there was no pension attached to the office.

The General Post Office

As I have already said, was originally situated on the site of the Small Cause Court, close to the old Ice House on the west side. This is one of the very few buildings in Calcutta about which I have the least recollection, I suppose owing to it having been one of the first to be demolished. It was no longer in existence at the time of the great cyclone of 1864. As far as my memory serves me, it was a low-roofed, one-storeyed building, having a decidedly godownish appearance, fenced in on the south side, which was the entrance, by a row of low, green-painted

palings with an opening in the centre. It was however notwithstanding a place of great interest for the time being, more particularly to boys like myself having recently landed in a strange country, for on the arrival of the mail steamer at Garden Reach, which occurred at about 3 o'clock in the afternoon, we used to go down after dinner to get our home letters, which in those days, I think, were more highly prized than they are now. I quite forget what occupied the site of the present post office building.

The Government Telegraph Office.

I think most people will be surprised to hear that the magnificent pile of buildings stretching from Old Court House Corner along Dalhousie Square to nearly half the length of Wellesley Place, housing a most important Department of Government, had in the old days a habitation within a portion of the premises now occupied by George Henderson & Co. It was originally only an ordinary sized house, having one entrance in Clive Street, and the top floor was occupied by one or two of the assistants as a residence. The only place for handing in telegrams for transmission was on the first floor landing, through a small opening cut in the door leading into the Jute Department of the Barnagore Jute Co., and the operators were clearly visible in the room beyond working at their instruments. The site

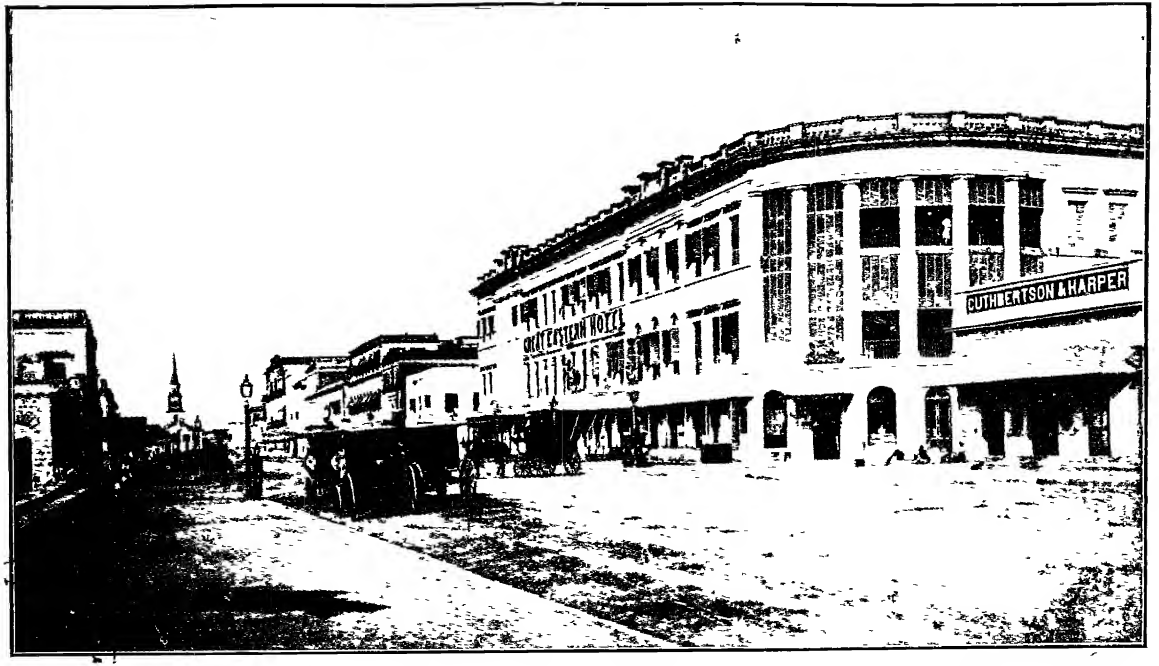


Photo by Old view of the Great Eastern Hotel *Johnston & Hoffmann.*

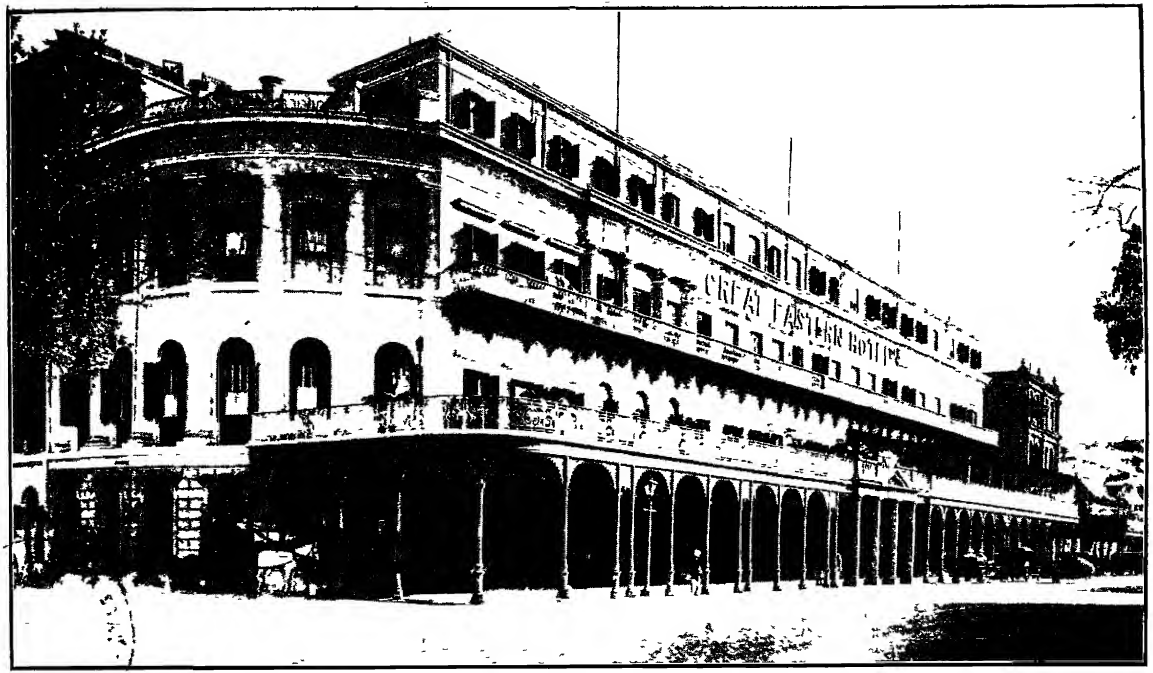


Photo by] Present view of the Great Eastern Hotel. *[Calcutta Phototype Co.*

of the present Telegraph Office was occupied in that portion in Old Court House Street by a low-roofed, one-storeyed building owned by a firm of the name of Burkinyoung & Co., piano and musical instrument dealers, that in Dalhousie Square by the office and produce godowns of W. Howarth & Co.; further on to the corner of Wellesley Place by a gateway and passage, ending in a flight of stone-steps leading up to a house, which, at a later period, was occupied by the Superintendent of Government Medical Stores; this, together with the godowns adjoining, was demolished some time ago to make room for the new wing of the Telegraph premises. I think there was also at a later period an entrance from Wellesley Place to the house in question.

Spences Hotel

Formerly covered the site of the Treasury and Imperial Secretariat Buildings, and was considered a first-class residence for old Calcutta-ites as well as for casual visitors. It possessed many attractions and conveniences, being centrally and pleasantly situated within easy distance of the maidan and Eden Gardens and business quarters. The entrance was from the east, facing Government House. There was a large, old-fashioned wooden gate and a lofty porch of considerable dimensions arched over by a passage running across the first floor from north to south, and

affording complete protection from sun and rain and leading into a spacious, open quadrangular courtyard, where carriages and other conveyances used to stand. The portico was flanked on either side by two or three steps, those on the right giving direct and immediate access to the dining-room which ran parallel to it in its entire length, the billiard and other public rooms branching off from them. On the left was the principal entrance to the residential quarters. The passage above referred to, I think, is a clear indication that at some time or other the hotel was divided into two sections and the porch was an open gateway. I once lived there myself for a time and many well-known Calcutta people made it their permanent home. In those days any number of people lived in town, over their offices, or in residential flats, and it was then as now noted for its extreme healthiness and salubrity.

The Great Eastern Hotel, Ltd.

Was originally styled Wilson's Hotel, and as such it is known even at the present day to gharriwallahs, coolies, and certain others of the lower orders. It was started long before my arrival in Calcutta as a bakery by Mr. Wilson, a well-known resident of Calcutta, and converted into a hotel at a later period. In the early sixties it was floated into a limited liability company by a few prominent businessmen, amongst whom

was my old Burra Sahib. It was an entirely different place in appearance, both inside and out, from what it is now; it had only two storeys and no verandah or balconies; a large portion of the ground floor was occupied by shops, selling all sorts of goods, and owned by the hotel. The whole of the central portion from one end to the other was a sort of emporium lined on both sides with a continuous row of stalls on which were displayed the most miscellaneous assortment of articles it was possible to conceive. In addition to all this they kept for many years a farm at Entally which they eventually closed down, and the produce which they then sold is now vended by Liptons in exactly the same place at the north end of the building.

It took the directors a very long time to discover that a combination of shop and hotel keeping was not a paying proposition although they had had plenty of convincing evidence year after year of the fact. I forget now at what period it suddenly dawned upon their minds the necessity of making a thoroughly drastic change and altering their whole policy; nor do I know to whom was due the credit of this *volte face*, but whoever it was he most certainly earned the lasting gratitude of the shareholders as well as every one else connected with the concern, as by his action he converted a chronic non-paying affair into a thriving and ever-increasingly

prosperous one. When they abolished the shops they devoted their energies to developing the place into a first-class hotel which it certainly never had been before, and proceeded to increase materially the residential accommodation. They erected a third storey, and built an extra corridor on the first floor and two on the second, installed an enlarged and improved system of sanitary arrangements, and added a bathroom to very many of the bedrooms. The walls were embellished with dados of bright coloured tiles and the floors paved with black and white marble. The old antiquated doors were removed to give place to others of the latest design with polished brass handles and fittings. Several alterations and improvements were also inaugurated in the public apartments.

There used to be a billiard table in the room off the dining-room in the north-west corner, and the two others adjoining were utilised as lounges. The space now occupied by the new dining-room overlooking Waterloo Street was, as far as I can remember, taken up by private suites. The palm court was built on the roof of the first floor and was a very great improvement to this part of the hotel as it removed from sight what had always been a blot and an eyesore. After the abolition of the shops, tiffin-rooms were established on the Waterloo Street side, which have since been converted into a spacious billiard saloon. The

The Old Royal Exchange.

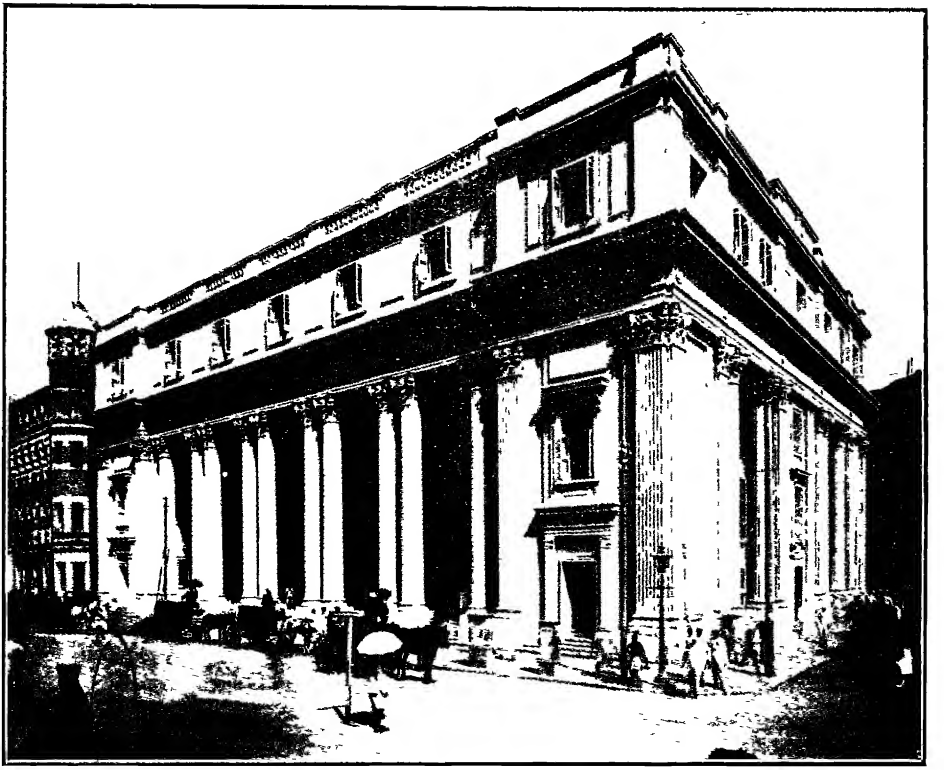


Photo. by] The New Royal Exchange *[Johnston & Hoffmann.*

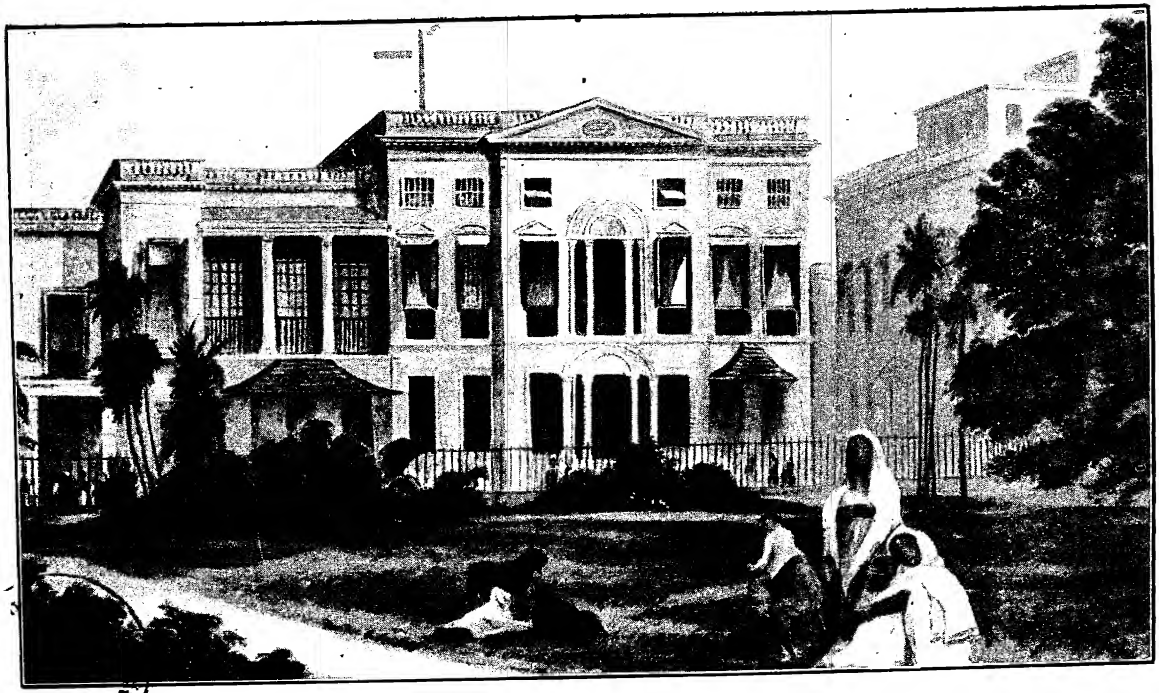
large hall to which I have alluded has been removed, and a new central entrance inclusive of the lounge has been driven right through the middle, greatly enhancing the appearance and conveniences of the hotel. The old south-west staircase has also been done away with, and the empty space on the ground floor let out as a shop. The erection of the arcade with a spacious verandah on the top forms one of the most striking and effective of the new improvements that have been initiated. But the introduction of the much-desired, necessary structural alterations on the ground floor gave the deathblow to a very old and enjoyable social function which used to take place annually at Christmas-time. It was the custom to hold a sort of carnival on Christmas Eve in the large central hall, which, for that one special occasion, was dubbed the " Hall of All Nations," and it was for the time being divested of all its former paraphernalia of miscellaneous goods which were replaced by a varied collection of confectionery and cakes of different designs and sizes made on the premises, bon bons, crackers, sweets of all sorts, and a variety of fancy articles suitable for presents. The hall was beautifully decorated and festooned with flags of all nations and brilliantly illuminated. Shortly after dark the whole of the elite of Calcutta society trooped in from their evening drive to exchange pleasant Christmas greetings

with each other and to make mutual little gifts. It was a most agreeable and enjoyable affair and quite looked forward to by all sections of the community. People who might not have met for months before were sure to meet there, and we all felt sorry when it came to an end. But the departure of people for dinner did not by any means bring the *tamasha* to a close, as later in the evening the elite of Dhurrumtollah and Bow Bazaar made their appearance, the ladies decked out in all their new gorgeous Christmas finery, and no doubt they enjoyed themselves fully as much as their more favoured and fortunate sisters of the *haut ton*. The hotel was supposed to close at midnight, but many of those already inside roamed about for a considerable time longer.

The verandah above referred to, overhanging the footpath of the Great Eastern Hotel, was erected by Walter Macfarlane & Co. in 1883, and there is a curious story regarding it, related by my friend, Shirley Tremearne.

Before it could be erected the sanction of the Municipality was necessary, and under the Act they were entitled to charge a fee of Rs. 100 per month for such sanction.

The Municipality, however, refused to sanction it unless the Hotel Co. agreed to pay a monthly fee of Rs. 300. The Hotel Co. were in a fix, they had placed the order for the verandah as the Municipal Engineer, Mr. Jas.



The Exchange—Mackenzie Lyall's old premises in Dalhousie Square. [J. & H.

Photo. by J.

The Exchange—Mackenzie Lyall's premises from 1888 to 1918. [*J. & H.*

Kimber, had approved the plans, and willy-nilly they had to consent.

However, one of the directors had been studying Bryce on *ultra vires*, and he went round to the Bar library to take advice from his friends there. Sir Charles Paul and Mr. Hill said offhand: But you agreed to pay, how can you get out of it? To this Mr. Tremearne (the director in question) replied: Yes, but it was an extortion, the Municipality is the creature of a statute, they have only statutory powers, and are not entitled to charge what is not sanctioned. As he was leaving, Mr. W. Jackson said: Look here, Tremearne, don't pay that Rs. 300 a month.

A case was then sent to the Advocate-General, and he held that the Municipality were exceeding their powers in levying such a charge.

Sir Henry Harrison, the Chairman of the Municipality, was very angry when the opinion was sent him, and a case was sent to the Standing Counsel, Mr. A. Phillips, asking him, amongst other things, if the hotel could not be compelled to pull down the verandah, the latter agreed with the Advocate-General and held, moreover, that the Municipality could only order the verandah to be removed if it was necessary in the public interests, and then they would have to pay compensation. Thereupon the

Municipality climbed down, took the Rs. 100 per month fee, and the matter dropped. But Sir Henry Harrison never forgave the hotel for what he called the dirty trick they had played him, and when the Municipal Act was amended, power was taken to charge such fees or rent as the Municipality think fit! (Section 340).

Museum and Geological Survey of India.

I have a distinct recollection of Bishop Cotton's School prior to its removal to Simla having been located in the vicinity of the site of the School of Art. It was a pavilion kind of structure, one-storeyed, crescent-shaped, and supported by pillars with a verandah encircling the whole of the outer portion facing Chowringhee. It must have been removed shortly after my arrival in Calcutta, as I can remember nothing further about it. There were, in addition, the old Small Cause Court already mentioned, and other buildings, but the only one that clearly visualises itself in my mind was a small bungalow, self-contained in its own compound, shut in by tall wooden gates in which some foreign ladies (Italians, I think) resided. The old museum, before the present building was erected, was contained in the premises of the Asiatic Society of Bengal, and in addition there was what was then known as the Museum of the Geological Survey

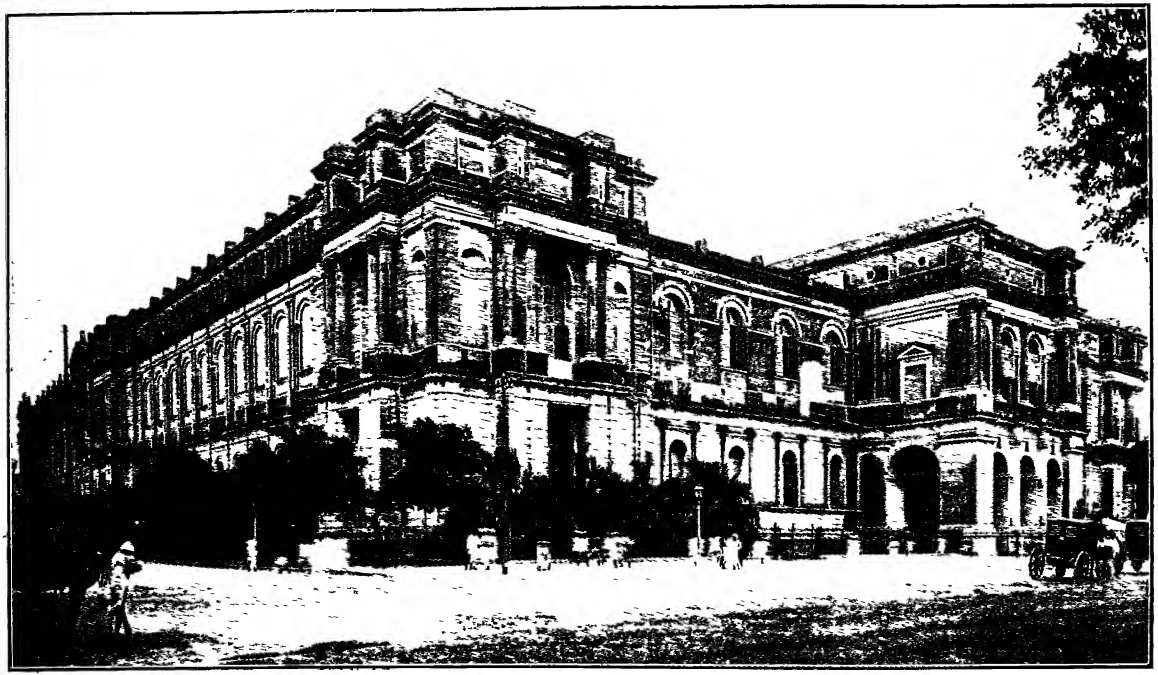
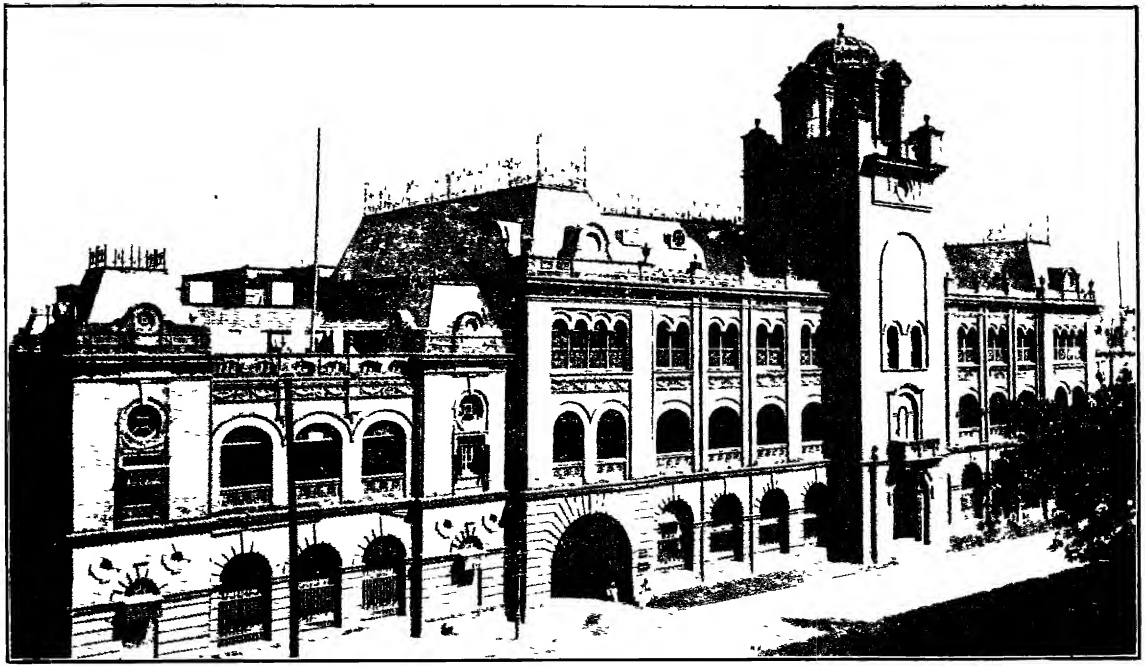


Photo. by] The Imperial Museum. *[Johnston & Hoffmann.*



Municipal Offices, at the present day.

of India located in 1, Hastings Street, now in the occupation of Grindlay & Co., and was under the charge of Dr. Oldham, a man of great attainments, and much honoured and respected by Government and all classes of the community. It will thus be perceived what vast strides have been made in the development of these particular branches of science and industry by the Government of India since the days about which I am writing.

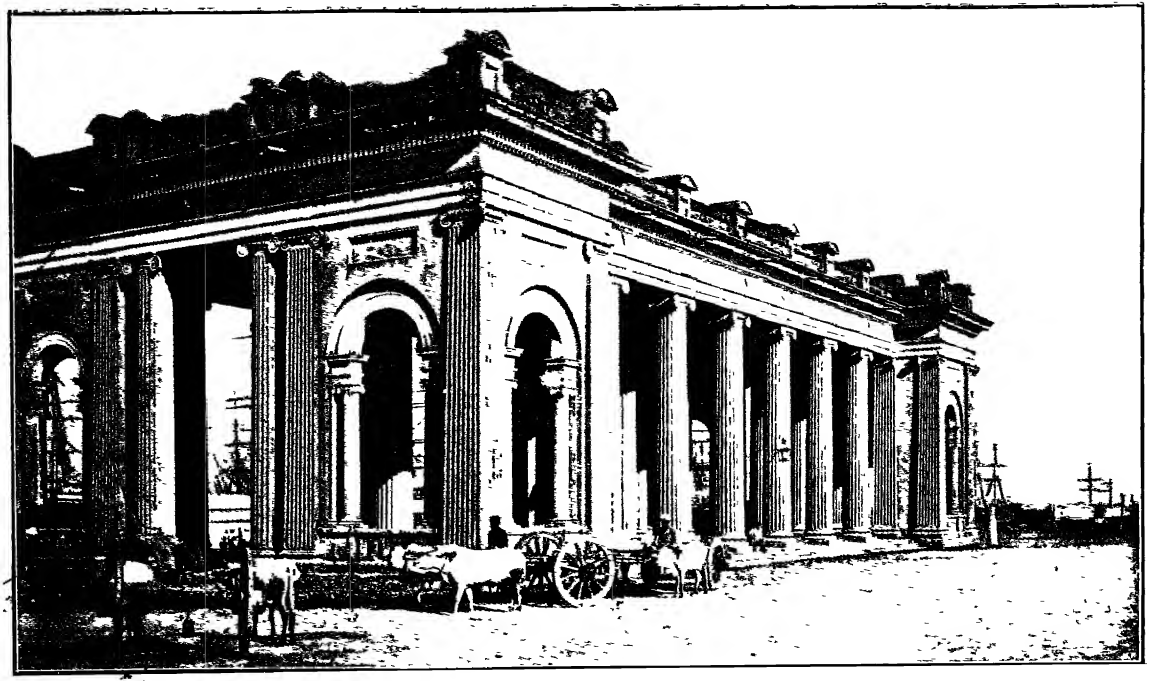
Military and Foreign Secretariat.

There used to stand on the site of this very handsome-looking block of buildings a long, one-storeyed tenement which went by the name of "The Belatee Bungalow," the proprietors being two brothers of the name of Payne. They sold provisions of all sorts and did a very lucrative trade. There was only one other shop of the kind in Calcutta, the Great Eastern Hotel. It was a business with a great reputation and patronised by all the Burra Memsahibs of Calcutta. A rather piquant and interesting episode occurred in connection with the wife of one of the brothers before the introduction of the revised rules to be observed in connection with the holding of Drawing Rooms at Government House. Mrs. Payne on seeing the usual notification in the public prints of the announcement of the approaching ceremony sent in her

cards intimating her wish to attend; but much to her surprise and dismay they were returned with a polite note from the Military Secretary to the Viceroy. Thereupon she sat down and indited a reply to the effect that, as she had already had the honour of being presented at a Drawing Room held at Buckingham Palace by Her Majesty the Queen, she thought she might reasonably consider herself eligible to attend the like ceremony at Government House. It is almost needless to say that the much coveted invitation was promptly forwarded. The Paynes, I believe, got into financial difficulties, and the business was eventually wound up. It was afterwards converted into what in those days was called "Investment Rooms," where they sold all sorts of ladies' requirements and was known as "Old Moores," owing, I presume, to the fact of the proprietor having rather a venerable appearance, and to his having kept the same kind of establishment for many years in Hare Street in the premises now in the occupation of Dewar & Co., the great firm of whisky distillers.

Prinseps Ghaut, Strand.

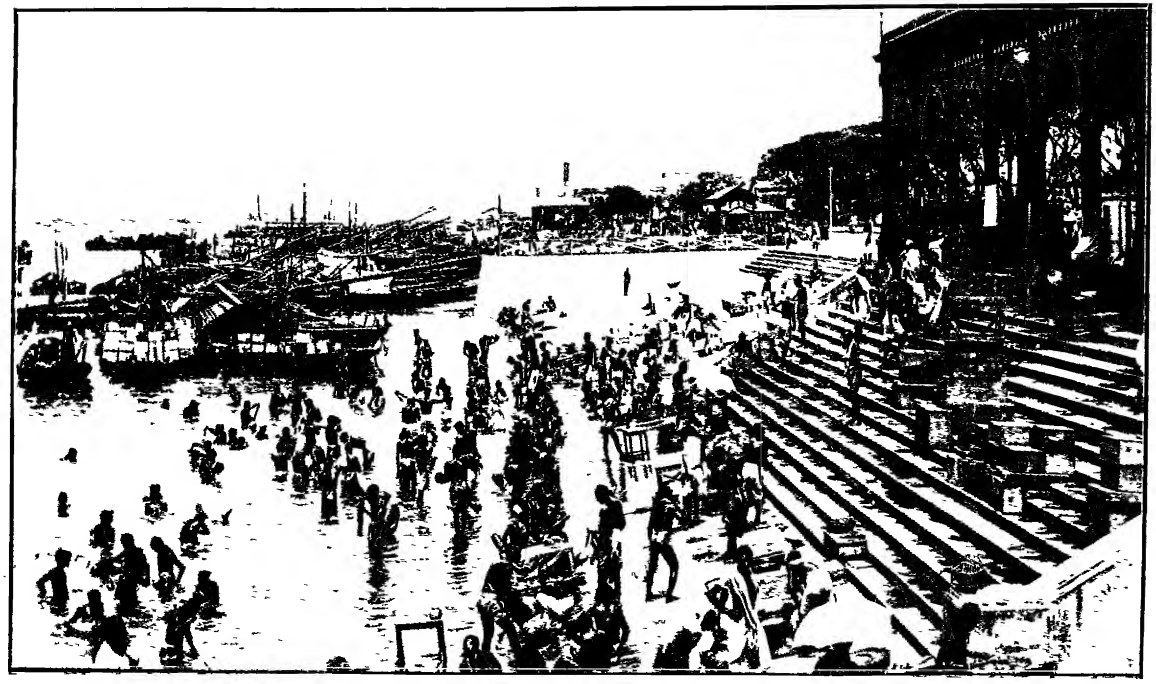
When I arrived in Calcutta in the sailing ship in which I had travelled out *viâ* the Cape, we anchored just opposite the ghaut which was then situated immediately on the river bank,



[Photo by]

Prinsep's Ghât from the land side

[Johnston & Hoffmann



Mullick's Bathing Ghât, Strand Road.

approached by a steep flight of stone-steps. When it was low water, and it seemed at that time to be nearly always so, you had to be carried ashore by the dingheewallahs on an antiquated kind of wooden chair or board, as the mud between the river and ghaut was more than ankle-deep. It was of course an immense improvement in every sense when the land was reclaimed from the river, and the present roadway at that part of the Strand was made and extended in a straight line as far as Tackta Ghaut. The railway to the docks did not then exist nor the two houses to the south of the ghaut, one of which is occupied by the Conservator of the Port. Another striking improvement higher up at the junction of the Strand and Esplanade Road, West, has been also effected in recent years. On the site of the Public Debt Office which has been added on to the Bank of Bengal there had stood, from time immemorial, a large three-storeyed house adjoining the residence of the Secretary and Treasurer of the bank, flanked on the Strand side by some low godowns in which Harton & Co. had their stores and office. It was at various times occupied as offices and residential flats, and was quite a pleasant sort of place to live in, particularly the top floor as it overlooked the river on the west and the Strand and Maidan on the south. The Bank of Bengal requiring space

for the new building of the Public Debt Office acquired the property under the Act, which I seem to remember resulted in a big law-suit in the High Court, as the owners claimed a good deal in excess of what the bank was willing to pay.

The Currency Office.

The site of this was once occupied by a concern called the Calcutta Auction Company, started, I believe, in competition with the well-known and old-established firm of Mackenzie Lyall & Co. It was a huge barn of a place stretching away from Dalhousie Square to Mission Row, filled from one end to the other with a medley of all sorts of goods and chattels which had been sent in for sale from time to time by various people. The office accommodation was also of the most primitive order, and consisted merely of a slightly raised wooden platform on which were perched a couple of desks and a few chairs. They had never held at any period a position of standing or importance in the commercial world, and some time after my arrival there were unpleasant rumours floating abroad about them, and I recollect shortly before their final collapse the manager's chair was occupied by the founder of one of the most influential and leading firms of the present day. When it disappeared the ground was acquired by the Agra

Photo. by BAKER

Currency Office, built on the site of the old Calcutta Auction Company [B & S,

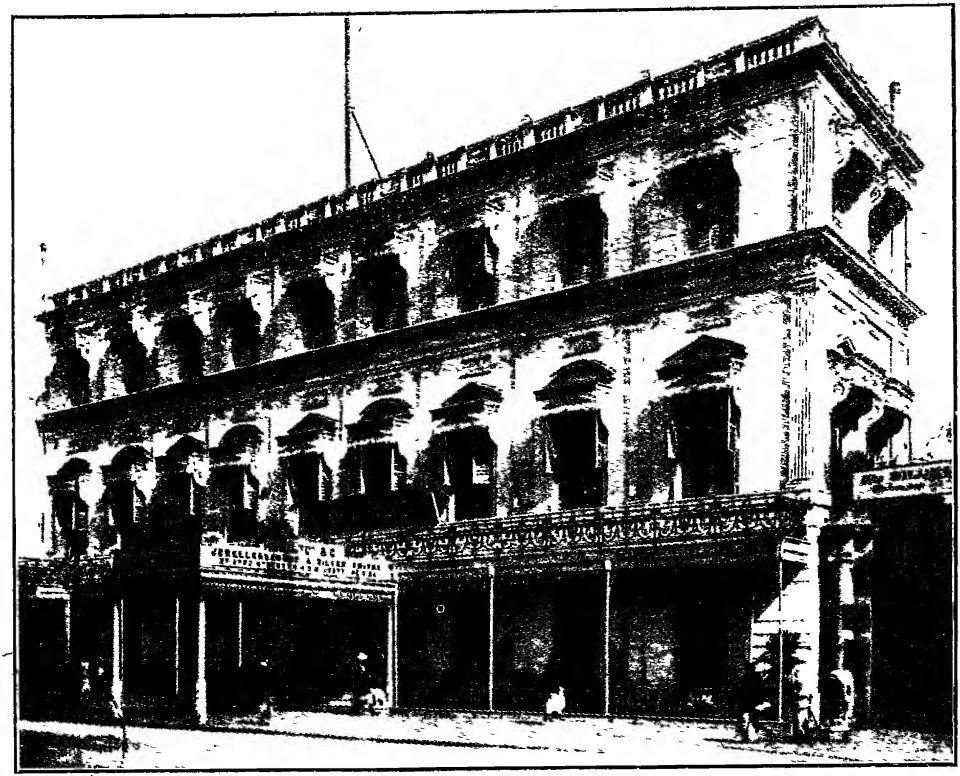


Photo. by] Hamilton & Co 's premises, Old Court House Street [*J. & H.*

Photo. by] Old view of Clive Street. [*Bourne & Shepherd.*

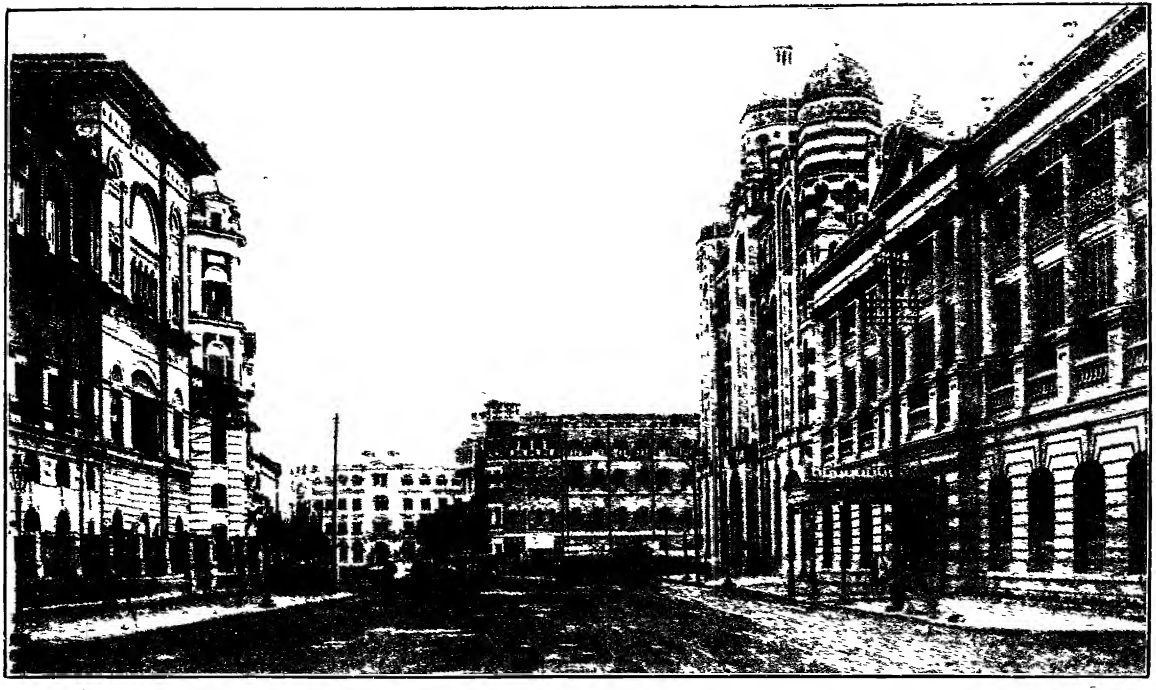


Photo. by] Present view of Clive Street, showing Chartered Bank's premises on the right, middle centre. *[B & S.*

Bank which erected the present very handsome buildings, shortly after, as far as I remember, it amalgamated with the Masterman Banking Concern in London, and it was subsequently known as Agra and Mastermans Bank. The office formerly was where Gladstone Wyllie & Co. are now. The amalgamation, I think, did not prove so successful as was anticipated, and eventually Mastermans dropped out of the concern and the bank assumed its old title, and though it was in a sound enough position even up to the date of its liquidation, the management considered it prudent to draw in its horns a little and sold to Government for the office of the currency department the larger part facing Dalhousie Square. It then retired to the back part of the premises looking on to Mission Row, which became the entrance to the bank. As time went on the bank seemed in some way or another to dwindle in standing and importance, and it did not tend to increase either its reputation or popularity when it issued a notice to the effect that in future no exchange brokers need trouble to call as it had appointed its own individual broker (Mr. Chapman) to do all the work. The bank continued to carry on in this manner for a number of years until one day it was announced that it was going into liquidation, for what reason no one ever seemed to know. I believe the liquidation proved eminently satisfactory and

the shareholders reaped a handsome return on their holdings, but it seemed a thousand pities that, after the bank had so successfully ridden out the awful financial storm of 1886, when banks and institutions of all sorts and conditions, and of much higher standing and position, went crashing down by the dozen like so many nine-pins, the management without any apparent reason should close down for ever one of the oldest banking institutions of the city.

The Hongkong Bank.

The site on which these premises stand, as well as those to the east as far as Vansittart Row and the new block at the corner now in course of building, was for very many years in the occupation of Mackenzie Lyall & Co. as an auction mart. It was an old-fashioned place of two storeys having rather a dilapidated appearance, and the top floor consisted of a series of rambling, ramshackle rooms, one leading into the other, extending away back to the old office of the Alliance Bank of Simla in Council House Street. These were at one time the residential quarters of one of the partners of the firm, and adjoining on the north stood the Exchange Gazette Printing Press. That portion on the western side was once, I believe, the assembly rooms of Calcutta, where dances and other social

Photo. by] 12, Dalhousie Square, East, showing West End Watch Co.'s premises [*J & H*

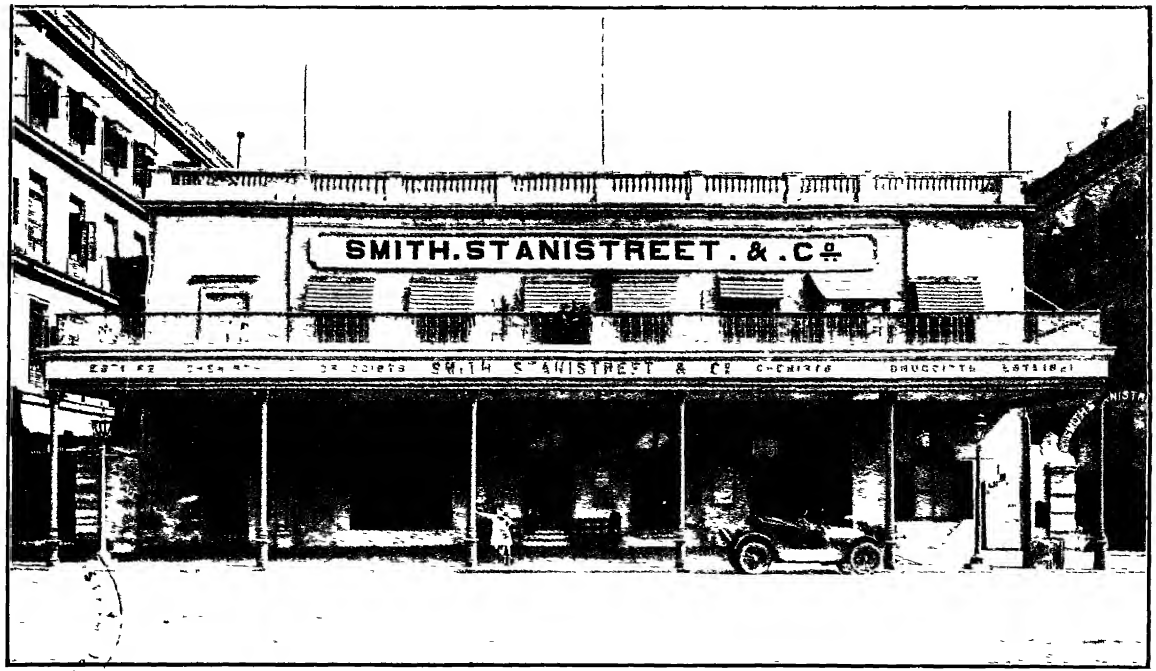


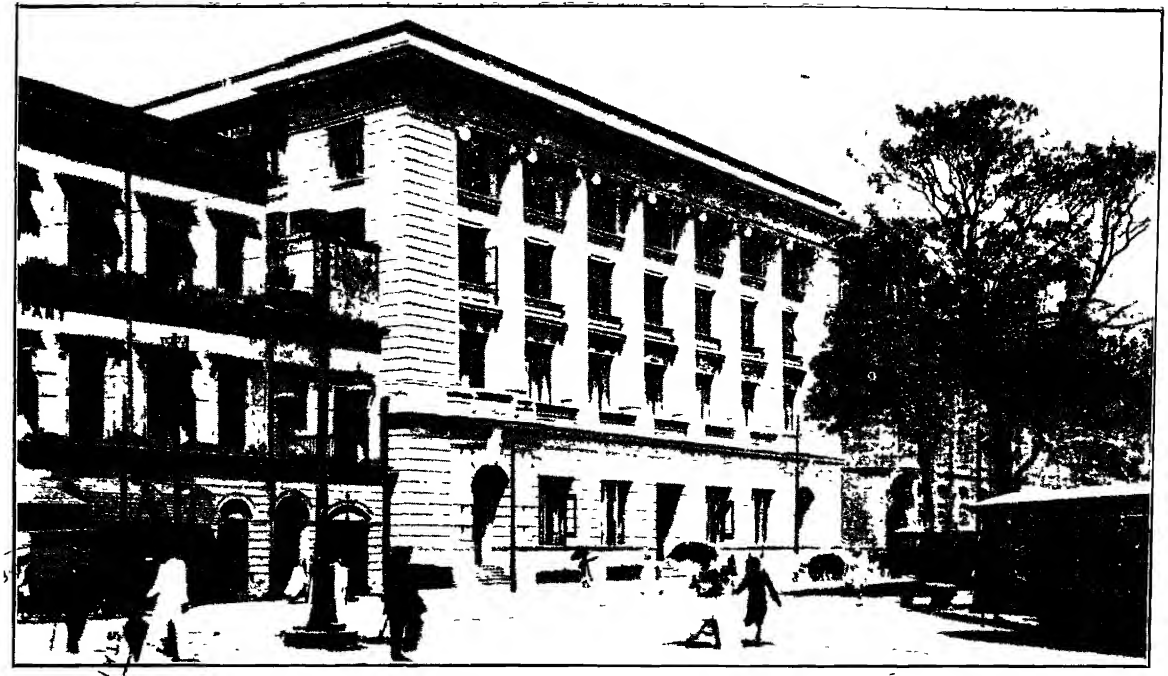
Photo. by] Smith, Stanistreet & Co 's premises, Dalhousie Square, East [*Johnston & Hoffmann.*

functions used to take place. Later in the sixties, I recollect, it was for a time utlised amongst other things as investment rooms where some of the ladies of Calcutta congregated about noon and met their gentlemen friends engaged in business in the city. It was also the room in which the Government held the public sales of opium of which Mackenzie Lyall & Co. had at one time the sole monopoly. There is a story told, and a perfectly true one, to the effect that one chest of opium was once bid up to the enormous sum of Rs. 1,30,955. The circumstances that brought this about originated in the China steamer being overdue and hourly expected; consequently the buyers were in total ignorance of the state of the market on the other side, so in order to prolong the sale as far as possible they went on bidding against each other until they ran the price up to the figure above mentioned, which, however, never materialized. Mackenzie Lyall & Co. continued to occupy the place until the year 1888 when they removed to their present building in Lyons Range, from which they contemplate a further change in the early part of next year to premises now in course of erection at Mission Row.

The United Service Club

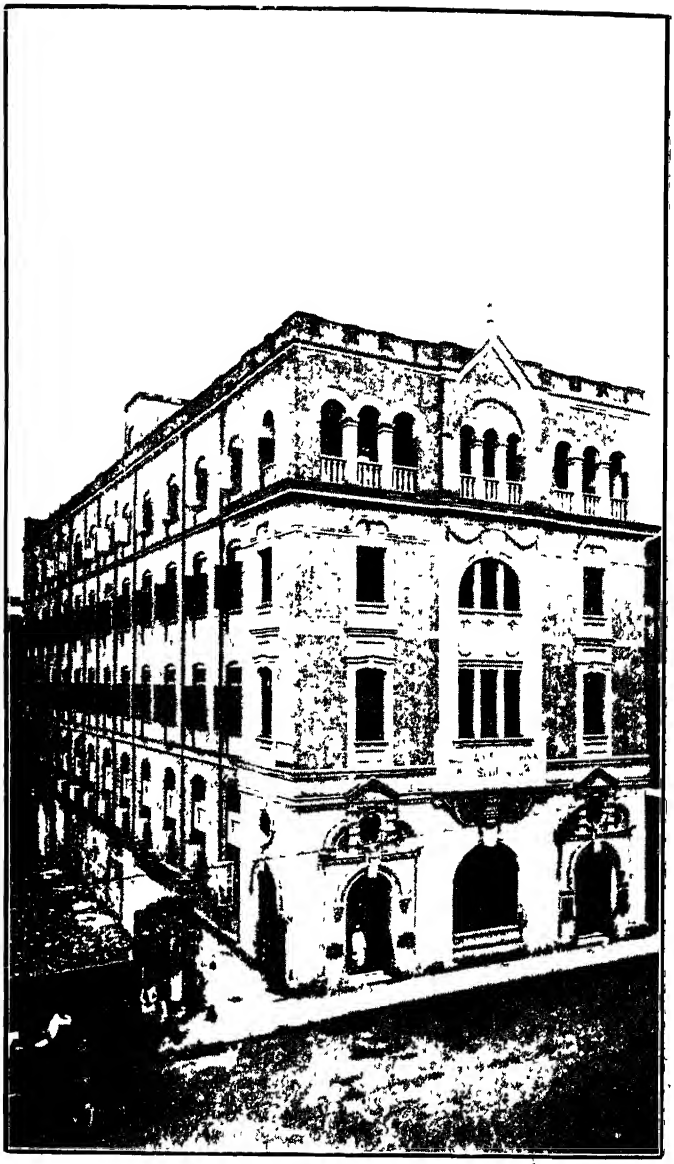
Was formerly styled the Bengal Military Club, the members of which were limited to the

I. C. S. and military services. As time, however, moved on and things changed they found that this particular form of exclusiveness was rather an expensive luxury, and very wisely threw open wide the heavenly portals and admitted within their celestial and sacred precincts members of other government services, save and except those of the Bengal pilots. Why the club ever made this invidious distinction, of course I cannot say, but at a later period, recognising possibly the injustice of their action, they rescinded their prohibition, and now the pilots sit in the seats of the mighty amongst the members of the other services. The club house, as many people will recollect, originally stood on the site of Chowringhee Mansions. It was quite an ordinary looking dwelling enclosed by a brick-wall skirting Chowringhee Road, and the building extended for some little distance down Kyd Street. In addition to the club house itself, there were several other houses in Park Street attached to it, and I think where the Masonic Lodge has now its habitation was once their property. Before the war the members in the cold weather used to give an "At Home" once a week which was looked upon as one of the society functions of Calcutta. It took the form of a garden party on the lawn from about 5 o'clock to 7 o'clock, and a band was always in attendance to brighten and enliven the proceedings.



[Photo. by]

McLeod & Co.'s new premises, Dalhousie Square, West. [*Johnston & Hoffmann.*



Alliance Bank of Simla.

The Sailors' Home

When I first came to Calcutta was situated in Bow Bazar Street on the site of the Police Office at the corner of Chitpore Road which has been recently vacated. The place became in the course of time a crying scandal, as it was infested all about with native grogshops in which they sold to the sailors most villainous, poisonous decoctions under various designations; also by a very low class of boarding houses run by a thieving set of low-caste American crimps who used to fleece and swindle poor Jack out of all his hard-earned money. They would give him board and lodging of a sort, with bad liquor, and when he had secured a ship they would often ply him with drink the day before he sailed after having first secured his advance note and have him conveyed on board in a more or less helpless condition. The next day when he came to his senses he would find himself in the forecastle of some strange ship in unfamiliar surroundings half-way down the river without a rupee in his pocket and very often with little more than the clothes he stood up in. The Government at last stepped in and ordered the home to be transferred to its present position, but for some reason or other it took four years to accomplish. Jack is now very comfortably off and well taken care of, and away from the temptations that formerly assailed

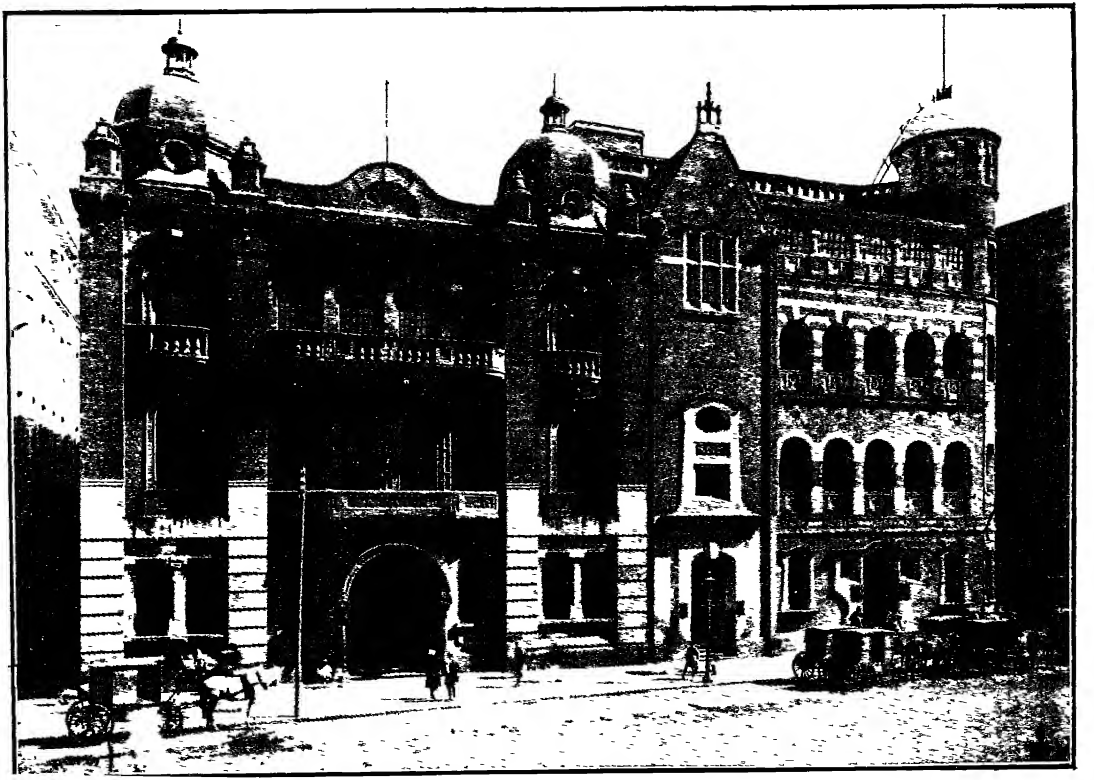
him; besides this he is entirely free from any attempts to swindle him, as the authorities are always prepared to cash his advance notes for a small fee. This change has proved to be the greatest boon that could have been conferred on the sailors coming to Calcutta.

Since writing the above, I have been furnished by my friend Willie Bryant, Branch Pilot of the Bengal Pilot Service, with the following particulars of incidents that occurred in the days that I am writing of, for the correctness of which he can thoroughly vouch. I feel sure they will be read with the greatest interest.

Many men were shanghied on board ships in the 80's and 90's, more especially American ships; in fact there was in Calcutta a recognised American boarding master, or otherwise known as a crimp.

In '87 they shanghied a padre on board an American vessel, and when he awoke in the morning found the vessel on her way down the river. On his expostulating with the captain, the reply was: "Well, I guess you are down as J. B. Smith and Sonny, you are bound to Salem or h——"

On 6th December, 1887, the *Alpheus Marshall*, an American vessel, had a sale-maker shanghied on board; he, poor fellow, had been only on shore once from a ship called the



Photo, by] Writers' Buildings and Holwell Monument [*Bourne & Shepherd.*

Terpsichore and was buying soap, matches, etc., when some man offered to stand him a drink, which he accepted. The next thing he remembered he was outward bound for Boston, Mss.

On the *Bolan*, on the 17th February, 1888, a soldier was shanghied, or at least he said so, and when interviewed on the way down the river, came to the salute as he had been taught. He went on to Liverpool where he was arrested.

The renowned boarding master, after the Government stopped these houses and methods, went to America as bos'un of a brigantine called the *Curlew*, and a very fine sailor he was too.

On 24th July, 1890, a case occurred of a woman being shanghied. Of course when she proved her sex she was landed at Diamond Harbour.

There was also a case of a dead man being taken on board as drunk and shanghied; this was discovered after the ship had started for sea.

Calcutta Tramways.

The first attempt to introduce horse traction tramways in the city was made as far back as 1873, when the Corporation constructed a line commencing at Sealdah. It ran along Baitakhana, Bow Bazaar, and Dalhousie Square through the Custom House premises into and

along Strand Road to the terminus at Armenian Ghaut. But after the lapse of about nine months it was discontinued as it was found to be working at a dead loss, the reason for which it is unnecessary to state here. The plant was subsequently sold. Some years later Mr. Soutar and Mr. Parish—the former a brother of the then Acting Chairman of the Municipality—obtained the necessary concession to construct a comprehensive system of tramways throughout the city, on which they formed a syndicate with the object of giving practical effect to the proposed scheme. Eventually in 1879 they disposed of all their rights and existing plant to the Calcutta Tramways Co. for the sum of £4,000 per mile, and the latter commenced operations in the latter part of 1880. But the company could not make headway, and the poor shareholders got very little return for their investment until the introduction of the electric system in 1902. Then matters brightened up considerably and an era of great prosperity set in, which has been fully maintained ever since. I think the company's last dividend was 9½ per cent.

The first manager of the company was Mr. Maples, but, as far as I recollect, he did not stay very long and retired to England. He was succeeded by my friend, Martyn Wells, who was a *persona grata* with all sections of the Calcutta community. He was a man of most

genial, bright and happy temperament, an earnest and enthusiastic mason, the possessor of a magnificent voice, which was at all times at the service of the public for any charitable object, and was invaluable at the smoking concerts at the New Club and other social functions; he was truly, in the words of Shakespeare, "a fellow of infinite jest, of most excellent fancy." He died very suddenly after only a few days' illness at the early age of 48 I well recollect the grief and concern expressed on the occasion which was both deep and widespread, and it was not confined to his co-workers and the employees in the tramway service, but was shared alike by the innumerable circle of friends, whom he had gathered round about him, and the public generally.

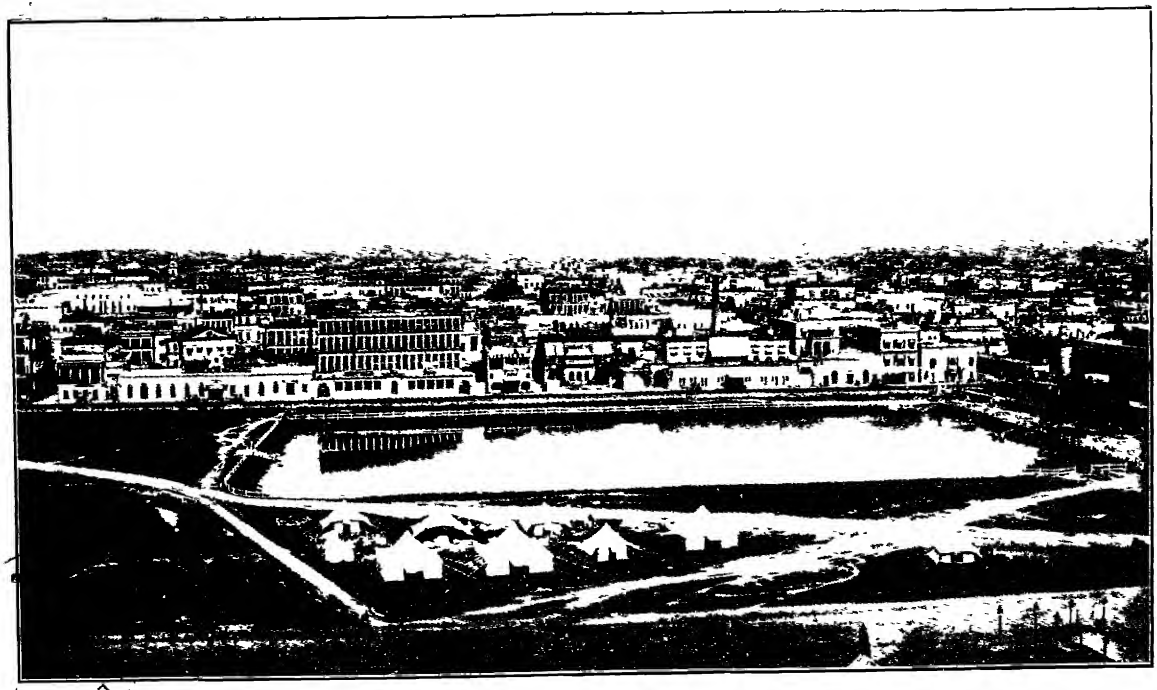
PART III.

Street and General Structural Improvements.

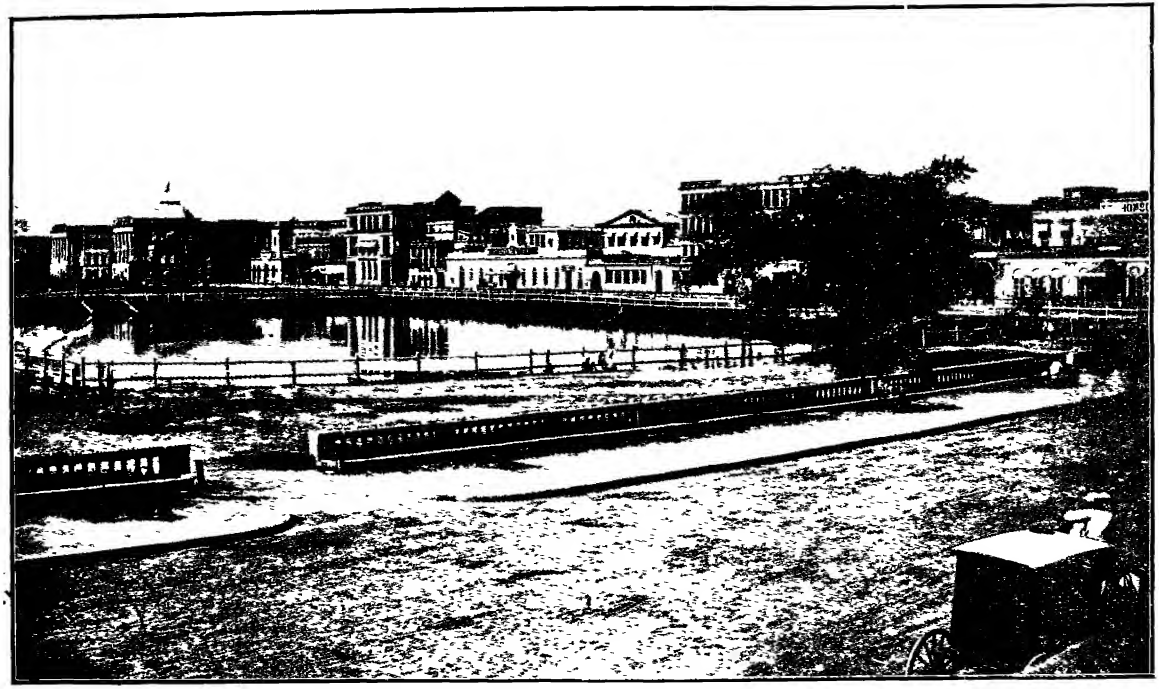
I THINK what must strike the observer of the present day more forcibly than anything else, after contemplating the wondrous transformation of Clive Street and its surroundings, is the great advance that has been made in the direction of the many and varied structural improvements and additions that we see on every side, several of which have been developed in the time of the present generation. It might not be amiss, with the view of ascertaining by a personal visit their nature and extent, to invite my Calcutta readers to accompany me on a short tour, say, from Scott Thomson's corner along Esplanade Row, East, then branching off into Chowringhee, as far as Circular Road, looking in *en passant* at the various streets on our way.

Esplanade Row, East.

The extensive pile of buildings that confronts us at the outset was, as we know, erected by Mr. Ezra on the space formerly occupied by Scott Thomson's shop and the two adjoining houses, the one nearest being the residence of the manager of the firm, and the other for a considerable time by



[Photo. by] Old view of Esplanade, East, showing Dharamtala Tank [*Bourne & Shepherd*



[Photo. by] Esplanade, East, showing tank now filled in. [Johnston & Hoffmann.

Morrison & Cottle, the saddlers. The Mansions contain twenty-four flats. This, as can be perceived, has entirely changed the whole aspect of this particular section of the city, which has been further enhanced by the erection of Thacker, Spink & Co 's new premises on the site of 1, Chowringhee, or old Mountains Family Hotel, which had been running for many years prior to it being acquired by the late Mr. Matthewson on a long lease of 30 or 40 years at an exceptionally low rental. All the buildings in this row, with the exception of that at the corner of Bentinck Street, have been built in my day, and many people will doubtless recollect that Peliti once occupied the house now in possession of the Trocadero. Turning into Chowringhee we are faced by the Bristol Hotel, formerly known as the Hotel D'Europe, the proprietress of which latter was the late Mrs. Scott of the Park Hotel, Darjeeling, formerly known as Madame Fienberg, and who was highly respected and greatly esteemed by the older generation of Calcuttaites, of whom she had quite a large clientele. She afterwards removed to the Hotel de Paris, and finally to 1, Chowringhee, and there established the Palace Hotel. She represented one of the old land-marks of Calcutta which, I am sorry to say, are now so rapidly disappearing. Opposite to the hotel there used to be a very dirty and unsightly tank, quite different from all the other tanks in

Chowringhee, which was eventually filled up, and the greater part of the ground thus reclaimed has been occupied by the Calcutta Tramways Co. for their Esplanade junction, and a small portion to the extreme west forms part of Lady Curzon's Garden. Before we proceed further on our travels I may as well state that Chowringhee, Esplanade Row, East, and Park Street were devoid of European shops, with the exception of the Belatee Bungalow, and, I think, T. E. Thomson & Co. The next street to arrest our attention is

Corporation Street

Formerly known as Jaun Bazaar Street, a place of ill repute and the resort of some of the worst characters and budmashes in Calcutta. It was a dirty, filthy, narrow sort of lane having no side-paths and the houses being built most irregularly and without any attempt at symmetry or alignment. In fact it had altogether a most disreputable and evil appearance. The street as all can see has undergone quite a transformation, more particularly in that section near the Chowringhee end, and has now become an ornament and acquisition to the city.

Chowringhee Place.

Here, as it says in the "Directory," is Chowringhee Place, formerly known as Chowringhee, but so utterly changed as to make it difficult to

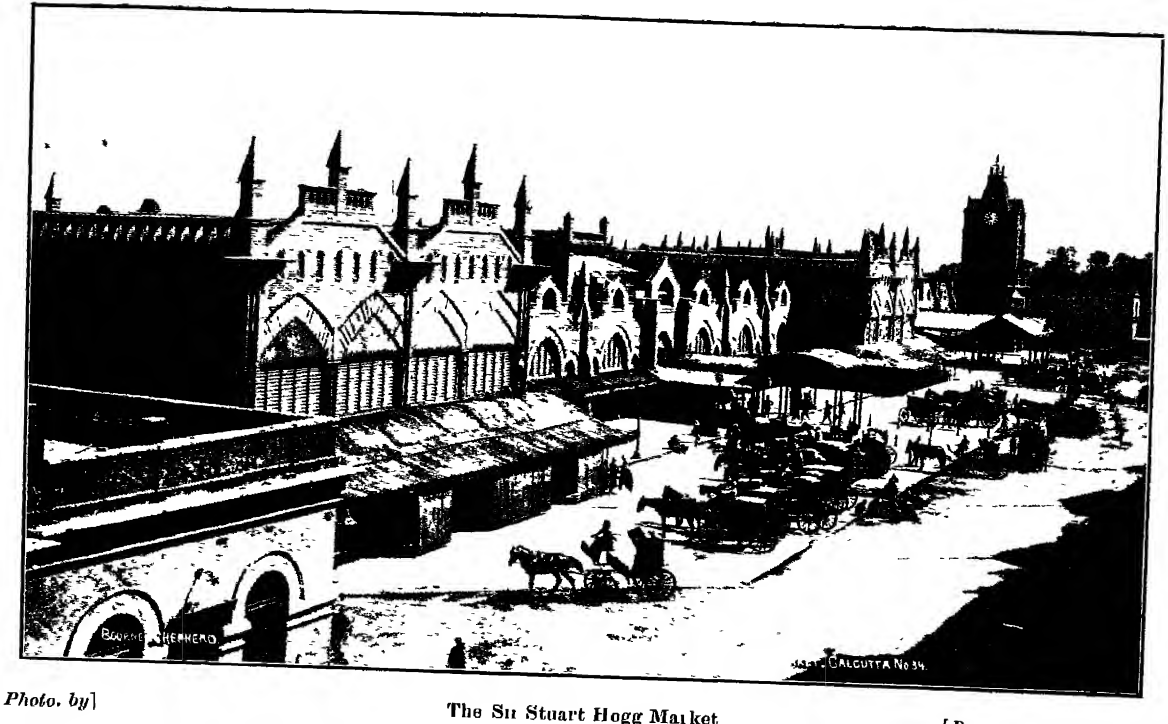
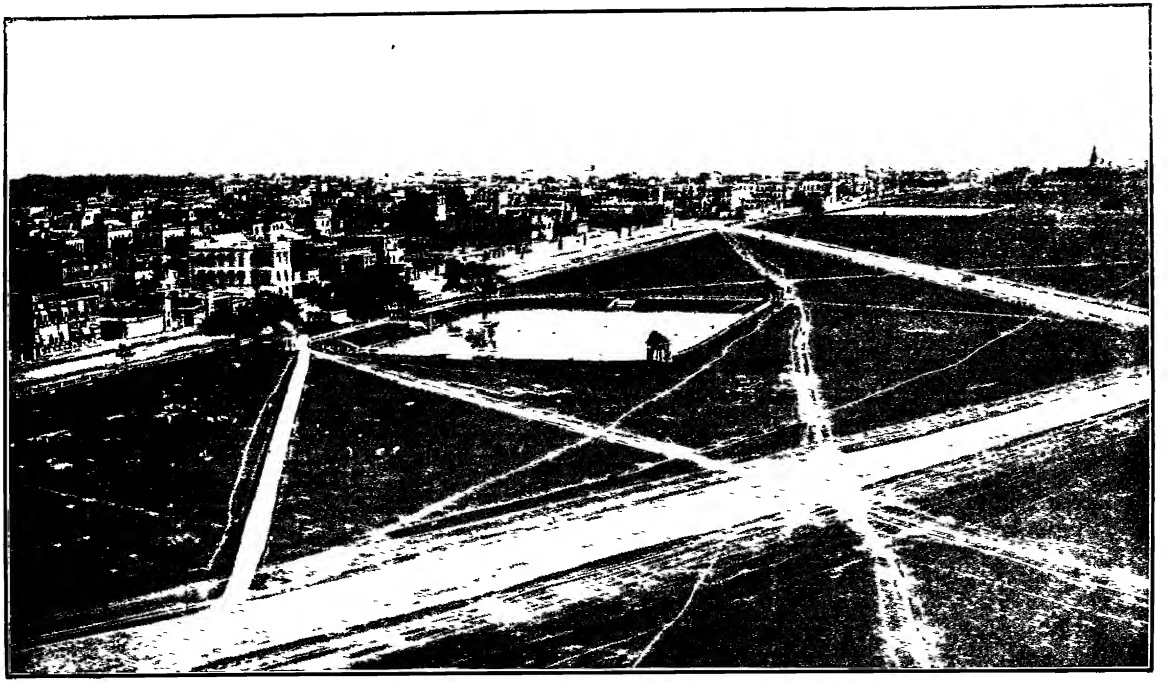


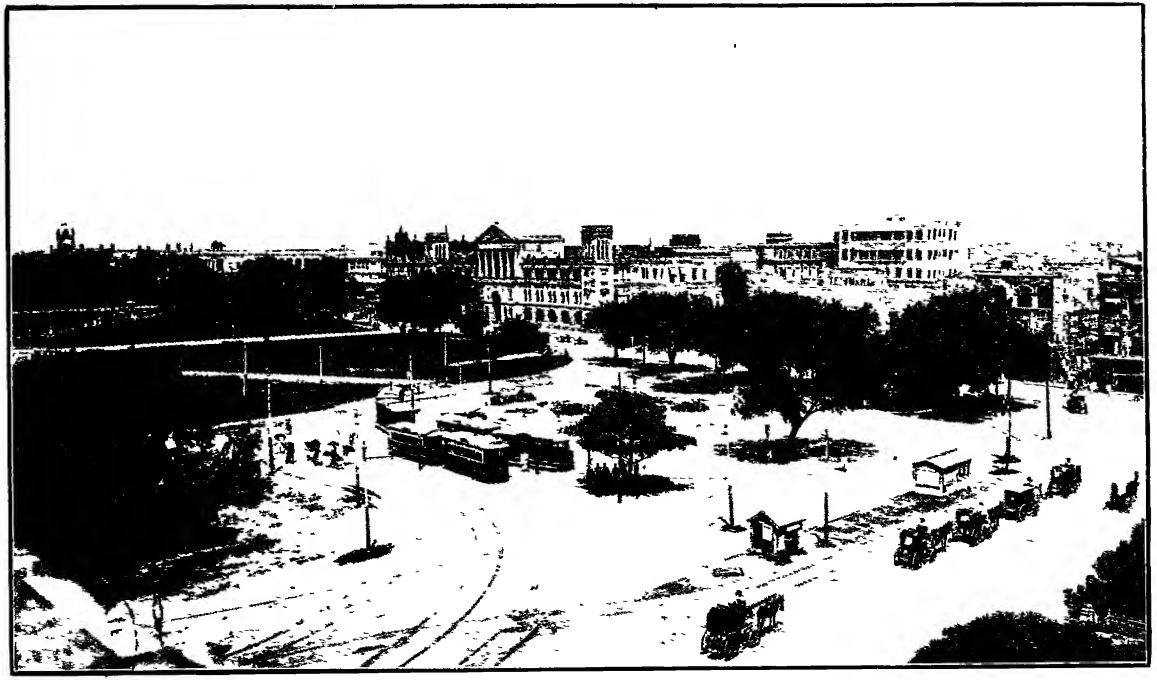
Photo. by] The Sir Stuart Hogg Market [*Bourne & Shepherd*



Chowringhee, showing tanks opposite Lindsay Street and Bengal Club.

Photo. by

Modern view of Esplanade, East, showing Tramway Junction and shelter [*Bourne & Shepherd*



[J. de H, Photo. by] View of Tramway Company's Esplanade Junction, before shelter was built.

recognise it as the old street of the past. There is only one landmark left to distinguish it by, and that is the house on the left, No. 10, forming part of the Continental Hotel. At one time this was occupied by Colonel Searle who, I remember, had two pretty daughters whom I used frequently to meet out at dances—one of them married Colonel Temple, Superintendent of the Andaman Islands, son of the well-known Sir Richard Temple.

I recollect there were two other houses, one a small, two-storeyed affair standing where the Grand Cafè now is. It was for many years in the occupation of a firm called Cartner & Newson, and they carried on a very profitable trade in the manufacture of jams, pickles, and several kinds of Indian condiments. The other house was much bigger, being three storeys high, and stood on the spot where the Empire Theatre is built. In the very early years it was a favourite boarding house known as 13, Chowringhee, and was always full of young people; latterly it was, I think, occupied by Colonel Wilkinson, Inspector-General of Police, who married a daughter of Dr. Woodford, Police Surgeon, all of whom were well known in Calcutta society. I must not forget to say that these two houses formed a *cul-de-sac* and that on the other side as far as I remember was bustee land. I have also an indistinct recollection that the right-hand side

going east from Chowringhee Road as far as the gateway of Cartner & Newson's old establishment was the northern boundary-wall of the compounds of the three boarding houses in Chowringhee kept by Mrs. Monk prior to the formation of the Grand Hotel and in which they became subsequently incorporated.

The Grand Hotel.

The nucleus of this very imposing structure consisted of five houses facing Chowringhee, inclusive of the three just referred to and two to the south, Nos. 16 and 17, which are clearly shown in the photograph. The former is the present main entrance to the hotel in which are located on the ground floor a billiard saloon, bar and lounge for the convenience of people attending the Theatre Royal, and No. 17 stands further to the south at the extreme south-west end of the hotel next to Mitchell & Co.'s shop. These two houses were once occupied by an institution called the Calcutta Club, and were connected with each other by a plank bridge. The members of the club were merchants, brokers, public service men and sundry. It was quite a nice sort of place, in some respects similar to the Bombay Club, and was managed by Colonel Abbott, father of the late F. H. Abbott, Superintendent of the Horticultural Gardens, Alipur. It carried on for some considerable time after my arrival, but eventually

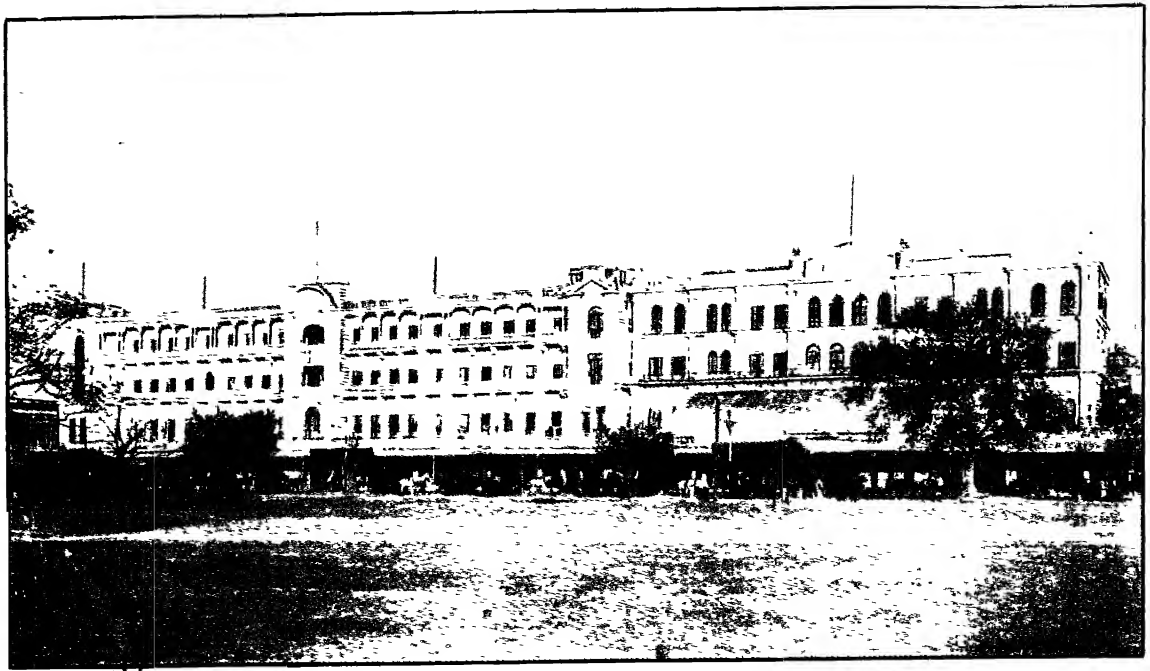
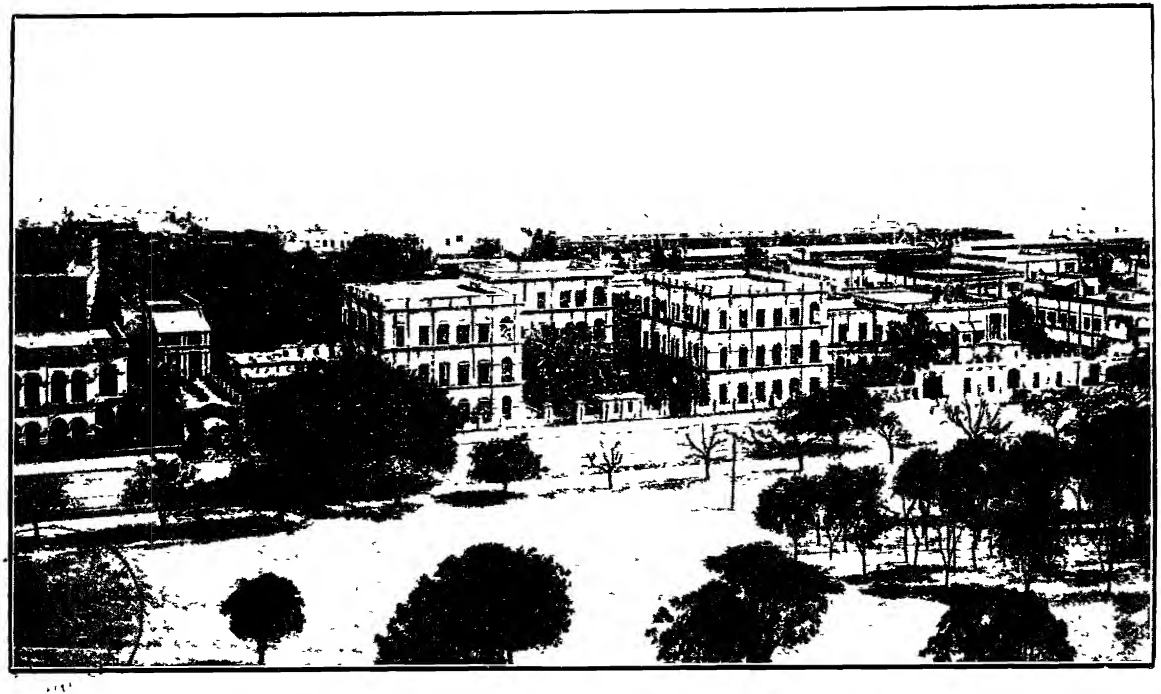


Photo. Abdullah Brothers

Grand Hotel.

[Bourne & Shepherd.



The five houses in Chowringhee that formed the nucleus of the Grand Hotel.

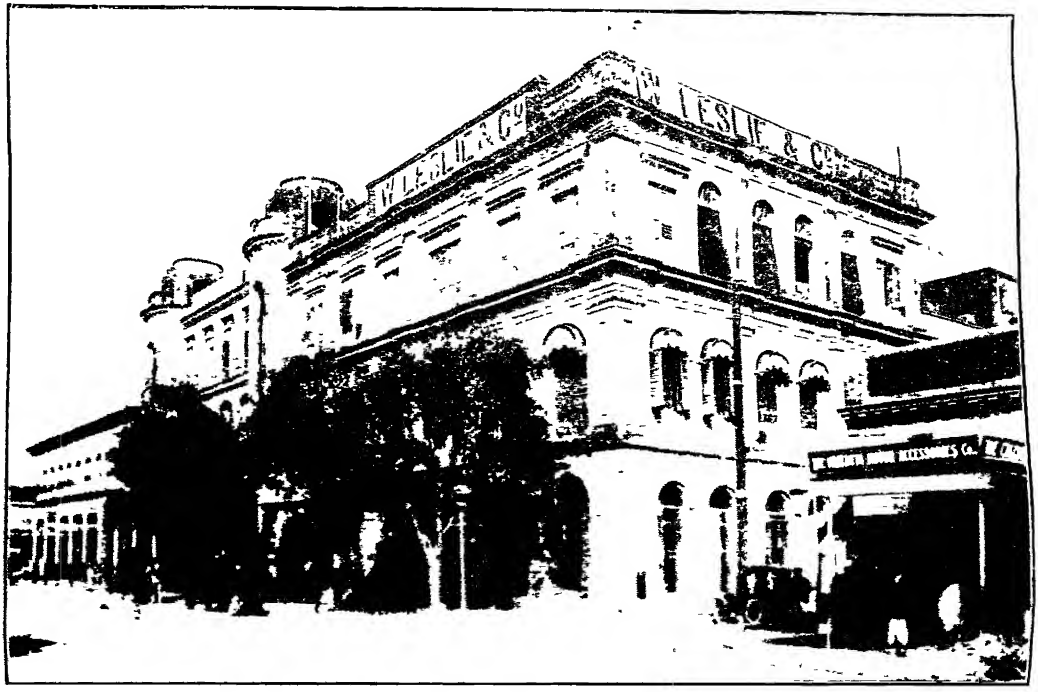
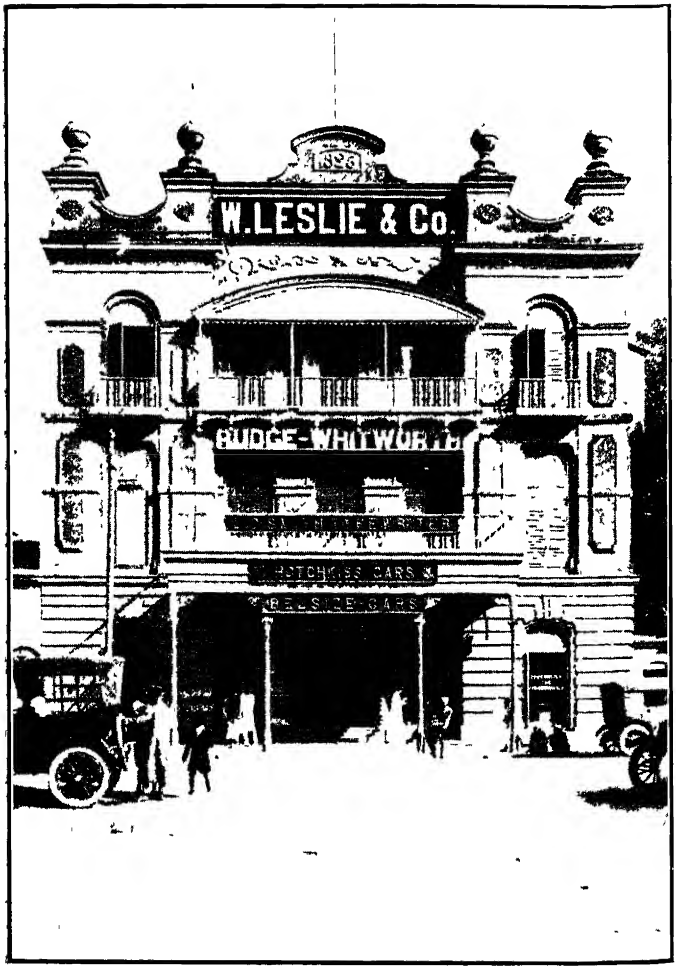


Photo by] W. Leslie & Co.'s premises, Chowringhee *[Johnston & Hoffmann.*



W. Leslie & Co.'s premises, Chowringhee
[*Photo. by Johnston & Hoffmann, Calcutta.*]

there was a split in the cabinet and it was wound up. The houses were afterwards, I think, let out in residential flats and boarding houses, and at one time No. 16 was converted into the Royal Hotel by Mr. Jack Andrews, former proprietor of old Spence's Hotel; they were finally acquired by Mrs. Monk. Mr. Stephen purchased from Mrs. Monk the whole of the houses herein mentioned and all the property attached thereto, and proceeded gradually to develop them into the very handsome-looking structure which now adorns the city under the style of the Grand Hotel. On the spot where the dining-room stands used to be an open air skating rink run as a private club. It was rather small, but we had some very enjoyable evenings. Of course all the members except myself have long since disappeared. I remember only a few— Mr. Ted Smyth of Turner Morrison & Co., Mr. Craik of George Henderson & Co.'s piece-goods department, Mr. Loraine King, who met his wife there for the first time, and Mr. J. J. Ross, well known in Calcutta society in those days.

Humayon Place

Is greatly changed from what it used to be. At one time in the very early days it was occupied principally by boarding houses of a second class type, and amongst them was one situated at the top at the left-hand corner,

which has been since pulled down and the present building erected on its site, in which young assistants in offices on not too large a salary used to get comfortable quarters with home like surroundings at a very moderate figure. It was as far as I remember run by a widow lady whose husband had left her rather badly off, and she took much interest in, and carefully mothered her young charges, amongst others a son of her own who was in the Bank of Bengal. On the opposite side an old house has been renovated and faced with iron railings which has much improved its general appearance. Turning into Chowringhee again we approach Castellazzo's, Mr. Leslie's new premises, the Picture Palace, and Perry & Co.'s shop. These are all built, with the exception of Castellazzo's, in the compound of Mr. Gubbay's old house in Lindsay Street, as well as all the other shops extending round the corner including Wallace & Co. I understand that Mr. Leslie has acquired the whole of this property, and will, in the course of time, demolish the present buildings and erect in continuation of his present new block a very handsome pile having a tower at the corner of Lindsay Street.

Lindsay Street

Has also undergone some wonderful and striking changes, not the least being the clearing

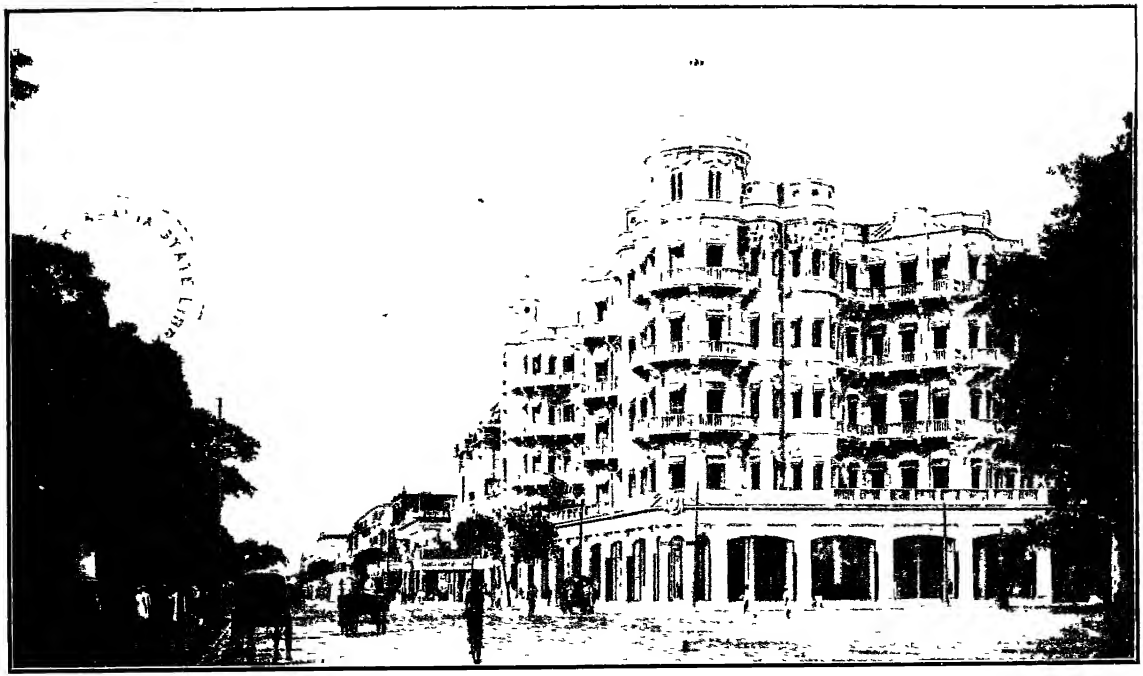
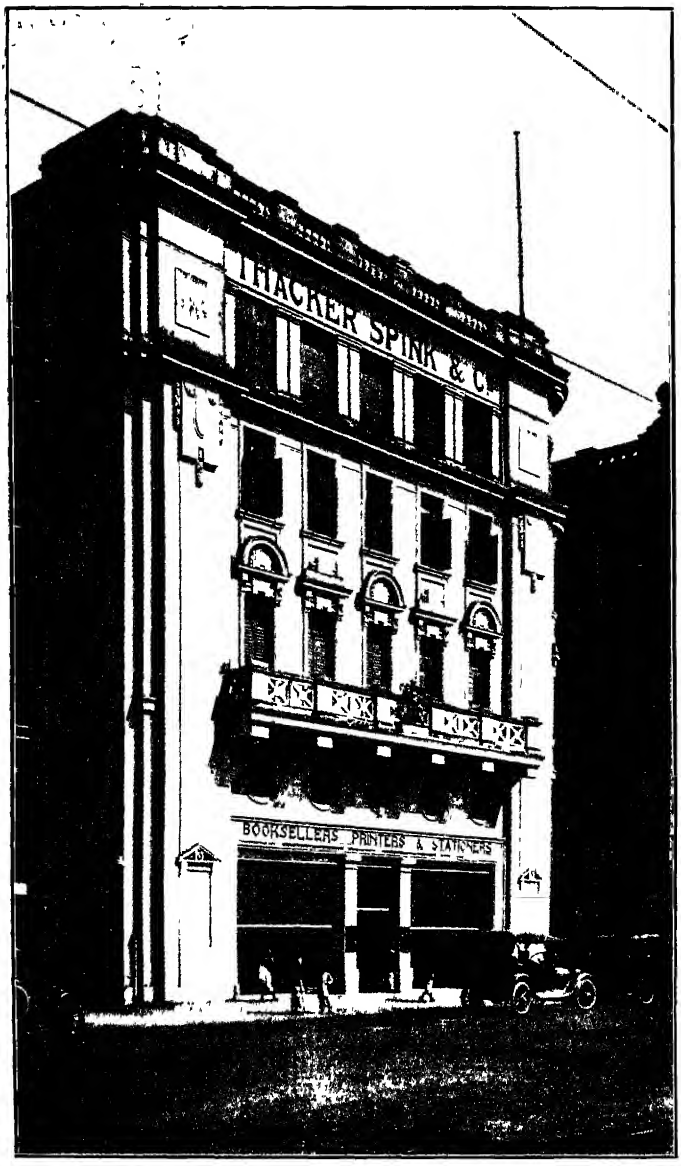
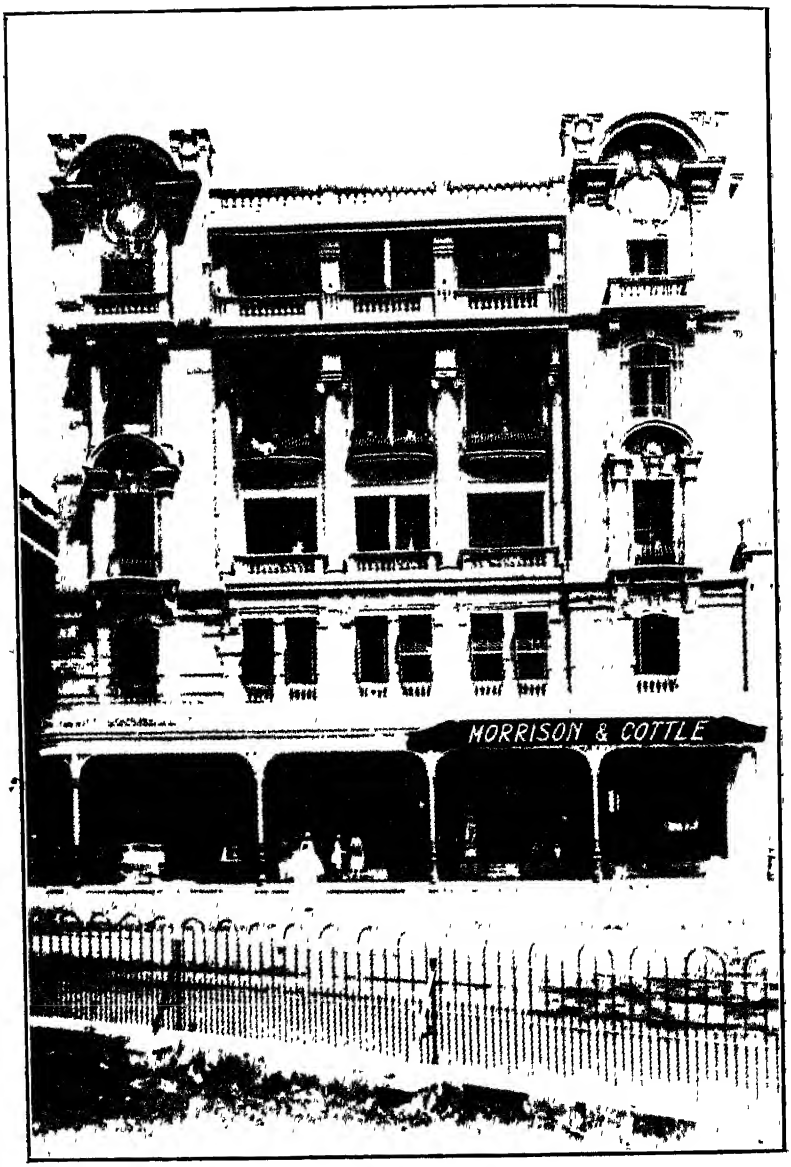


Photo. by] Esplanade Mansions, built by Mr. Ezra on the site of Scott Thomson's corner. [*Johnston & Hoffmann.*



Thacker, Spink & Co.'s new premises, completed in 1916.
[*Photo. by Johnston & Hoffmann, Calcutta.*]

Photo. by] Walter Locke & Co.'s premises, Esplanade, East. [*Johnston & Hoffmann.*



Mackintosh Burn & Co. and Morrison & Cottle's premises, Esplanade, East.

of the large open space facing the New Market on which the old wooden structure designated the Opera House had stood for so many years, and the erection of the new Opera House and all the shops adjoining up to within a short distance of Fenwick Buildings. The streets on either side running parallel to the market have also been much improved, particularly that on the eastern part where in former days there used to stand a low form of tea and coffee shops with one or two mean streets branching off to the east and leading to a disreputable part of the town. The whole street has been straightened out and brightened up, and many of the irregularities and disfigurements that were so marked a feature of it in the old days have been removed.

Y. M. C. Association.

On this particular spot many of my readers will doubtless recollect that Mr. W. T. Woods, one of Calcutta's earliest and most successful dentists, had his surgery and residence for a great number of years, and laid the foundation of the fortune with which he returned to England early in the present century. It was a place that unfortunately I knew only too well, but I will say this that he was at all times the gentlest and most sympathetic dentist that I ever came across, and for nervous people, ladies, and children he was *par excellence* the one man

to consult. The house adjoining, at the corner of Sudder Street, has always had the reputation of being haunted, and no one would go near the place for years, and it was gradually falling into decay, when one day to the surprise of everybody some natives appeared on the scene and occupied it, and later on Parrott & Co. leased the premises for their whisky agency. Let us hope that the material spirit has had the effect of exorciting the supernatural one.

Sudder Street

Is and always has been an extremely dull and most uninteresting street, entirely lacking in all the essential elements that go towards making a place look bright and cheerful. I really forget what it was like before the Museum was erected, but this did not apparently have the effect of adding to its attractions. The Wesleyan Chapel, School, and Parsonage have been built in my day on the site of what, as far as I remember, were ordinary dwelling houses. There does not appear to be even now much traffic of any sort passing through the street during the day.

Kyd Street.

Since the erection of Chowringhee Mansions and the new United Service Club this street has been much improved by bringing the various buildings more or less into alignment with one

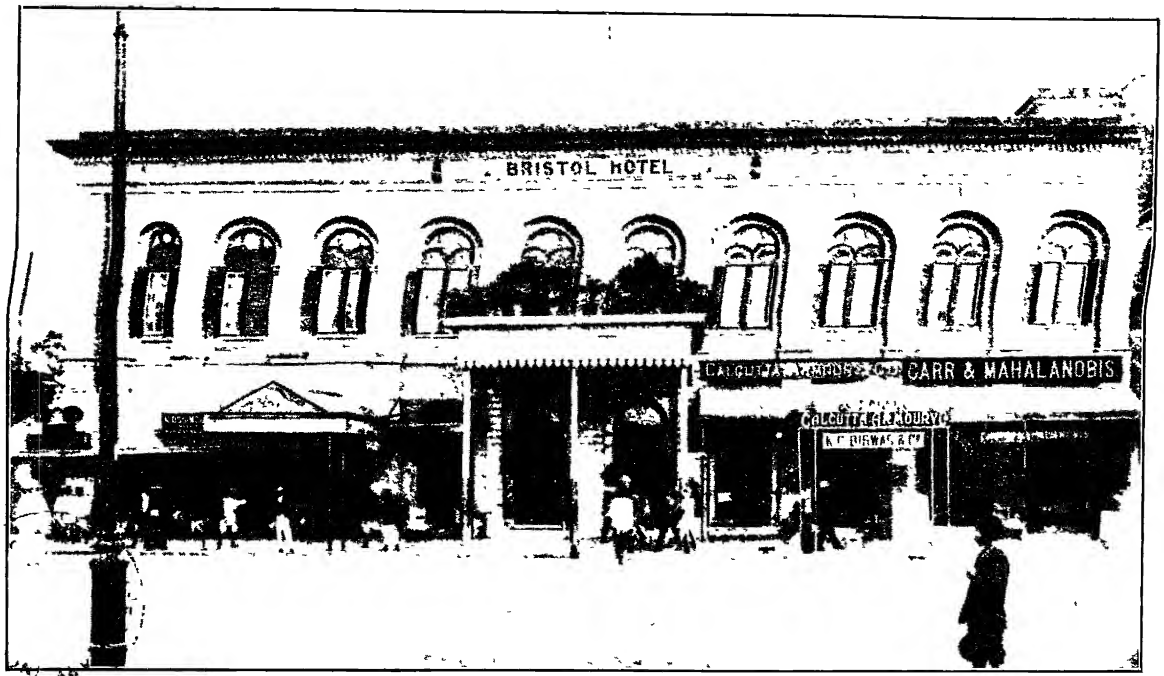


Photo. by] Bristol Hotel, Chowringhee [*Johnston & Hoffmann*

Photo by] Corporation Street, showing Hindustan Buildings—Proprietors, Hindustan Co operative Insurance Society, Ltd *[Johnston & Hoffmann.*

Hindustan Buildings—Proprietors, Hindustan Co-operative Insurance Society, Ltd., Corporation Street

Old site of the present Continental Hotel, Chowringhee.

Photo. by] Hotel Continental, Chowringhee [*Johnston & Hoffmann*

another, and by the introduction of paved side-walks on either side, more particularly near the Chowringhee quarter. At the Free School Street end new buildings have taken the place of old and antiquated ones. I well recollect there was for some time a house on the left-hand side which was occupied by the assistants of the old Oriental Bank, all of whom I knew very well, and it went by the name of the Oriental Bank Chummery. They subsequently removed to one of the Panch Kotee houses in Rawdon Street, where they used to give dances and other entertainments. The house next to their old one in Kyd Street suddenly collapsed one day and was reduced to a heap of rubbish, but fortunately no one was hurt. At the time of the Exhibition in 1883-84 there was an entrance to the grounds of the Museum alongside the archway over the end of the tank, which has recently been bricked up, close to which dining rooms were opened, and the elite of Calcutta society often dined there during the months that the Exhibition was open.

Park Street.

I have already observed that there were no shops in this part of the town, and there was nothing to distinguish it from any other residential street such as Middleton Street and Harington Street. As far as I recollect Hall & Anderson were the first to establish the new

departure in this respect. The site on which they have built their premises was an old, tumble-down godown, in the occupation of some French people of the name of Dollet, who sold French wines, brandy, and condiments. The row of shops immediately on the left, facing Russell Street, styled Park House, are built on a portion of the compound and the site of the stables and coach house of the old 56, Park Street, at one time occupied by the *late* J. Thomas, senior partner of the old firm of R. Thomas & Co. Proceeding further down the street on the same side we come to the row of shops extending as far as the corner of Free School Street. These, from the Light Horse Club, are built on ground that in the old days was part of a large compound attached to the girls' department of the old Doveton College, and the Park Street Thanna, which I observe has been lately pulled down, was the girls' school. Of course we all know that Park Mansions are built on the site of the Doveton College for boys. The large, imposing looking house on the opposite side, No. 24, was formerly occupied by the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal before Belvedere became the official residence.

Further eastward we arrive at Allen Garden, situated between the end of Camac Street and Wood Street, which for many years was known as the three-cornered tank, the

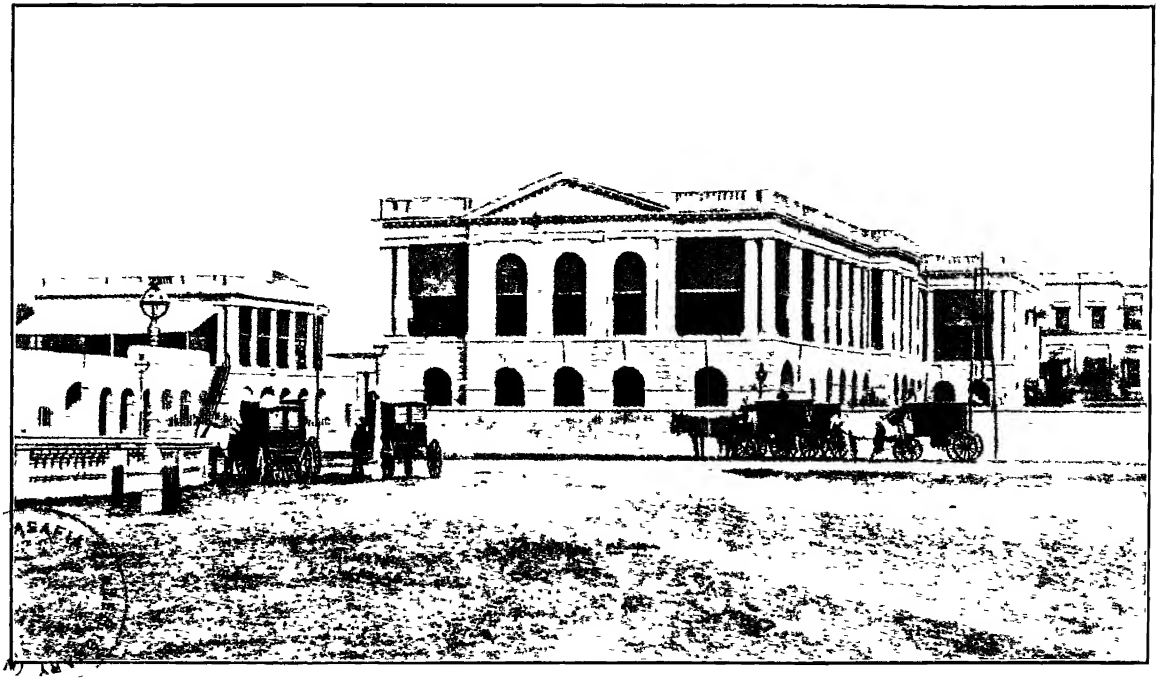


Photo. by] The old United Service Club. *[Johnston & Hoffmann.*

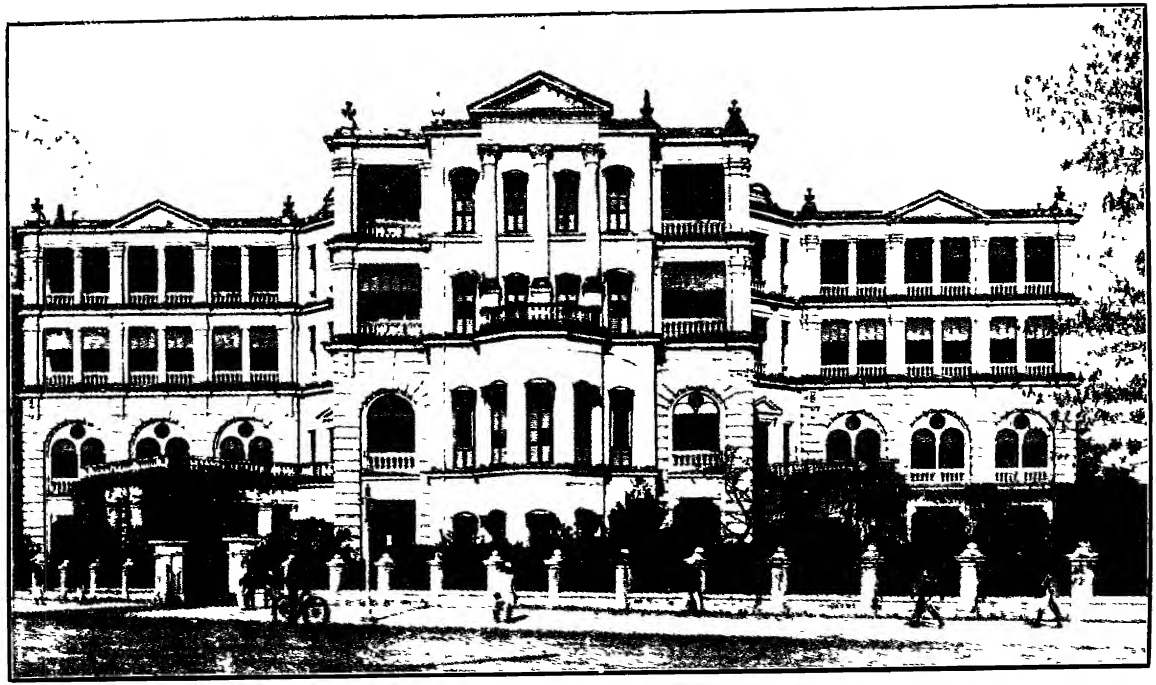


Photo. by] Present-day view of United Service Club. [*Bourne & Shepherd.*

Photo by] Park House, Park Street, William Heath's premises. [*J. & H.*

[No. 96] The "Haunted" House, corner of Sudder Street, Chowringhee. [*Johnston & Hoffmann*

banks of which were both high and precipitous, and a constant source of danger to children playing in the surrounding garden. The Corporation very wisely decided to fill it up, and so converted it into the present garden, in which are to be seen every evening crowds of happy and merry children playing about and thoroughly enjoying themselves. I might here mention that a rather singular episode occurred in connection with the filling in of the tank in question, for the particulars of which I am indebted to my friend W. H. Phelps. It appeared that the Corporation had mixed along with the earth and rubbish which they used for this purpose a certain amount of ashes from the incinerator which was then in use, which had the immediate effect of creating such an offensive and nauseating effluvia that it was found impossible to live anywhere near the place, and the houses in the neighbourhood were quickly evacuated. One of the houses facing the new garden to the south happened at the time to be in the occupation of a lady who took in boarders, all of whom very quickly left. She claimed compensation from the Corporation of the sum of Rs. 30,000 for the loss and damage she had sustained, and they paid it to her. She had to close the house altogether for several months. I might state that Park House above referred to was erected by Mr. Phelps, and was set back seven feet to a new

alignment in anticipation of the eventual widening of Park Street at the Chowringhee end which, I believe, the Improvement Trust have in contemplation. The block of buildings contained in Park House was the first important line of European shops erected in this great arterial section of the city.

Turning again into Chowringhee we arrive at G. F. Kellner & Co.'s establishment, the site of which was formerly occupied by one of the handsomest houses in Chowringhee of three storeys. It was, however, so badly knocked about by the earthquake of 1897 that it was considered unsafe, and would have had to be pulled down and re-built, but, rather than do this, Mr. Meyer, the owner, made an arrangement with Kellner & Co., whose premises at that time were in Bankshall Street, to build to their own plan a thoroughly up-to-date place which would embrace on an extensive scale all the necessary requirements for their very large and expanding business, including residential quarters for their senior partner. That this has been successfully accomplished I have recently had ocular demonstration, and I have no hesitation in saying it is a marvel of perfection down to its very smallest detail. It is well worth any one's while to pay a visit to their premises, and I feel sure that my friend Jeffreys will accord to them the same quiet courtesy as he did to me.

G F. Kellner & Co.'s premises in Chowringhee [*Johnston & Hoffmann*

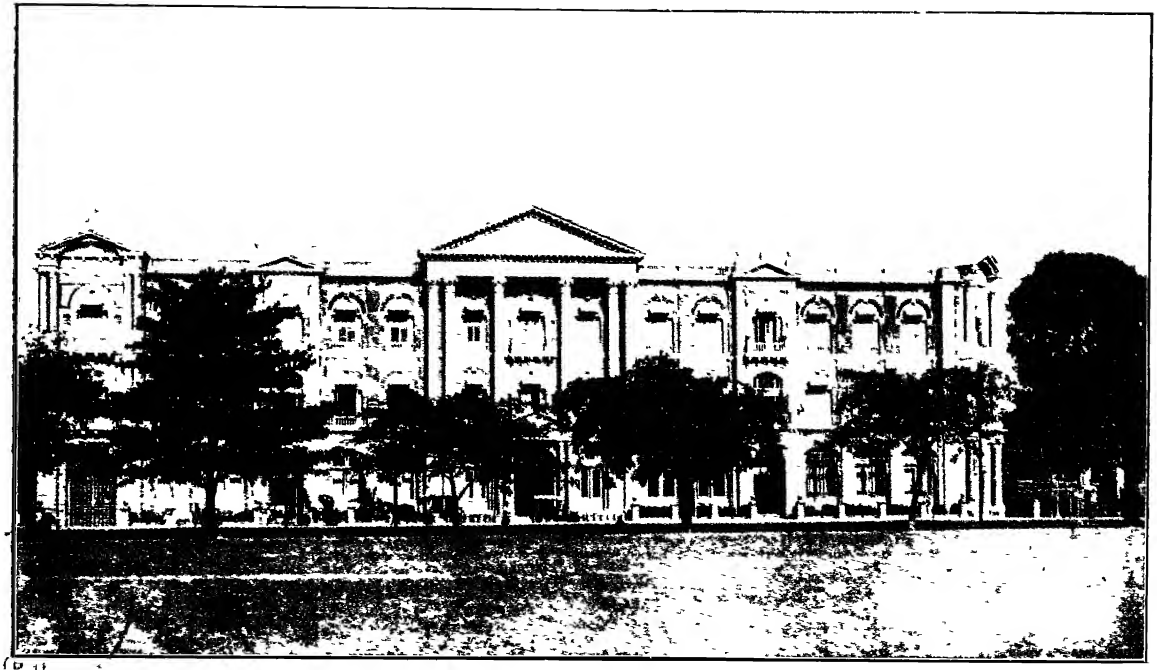


Photo. by] Army and Navy Stores, Chowringhee [*Bourne & Shepherd.*

Army and Navy Stores.

Most people will recollect the erection of this exceedingly handsome block of buildings, but few perhaps are aware that some time previously the Bengal Club had entertained serious thoughts of acquiring the original property for their new club house, and had even gone the length of having plans and estimates prepared, but for some reason the negotiations fell through and the idea was abandoned. As far as I recollect, the price was very moderate, some Rs. 2,50,000 or Rs. 3,00,000. I think the main objection to the scheme was based on sentimental grounds, many of the members disliking the idea of forsaking the old place in which the club had been housed for so many years. There is no doubt that it would have been an ideal spot, bounded as it is east, west, and south by three of the principal thoroughfares of Calcutta.

Middleton Street

Has undergone some changes and alterations. The first to make its appearance was the erection of the house situated in the compound of No. 3, on the left-hand side as you enter the gateway from the street; it rather spoils the general look of the place, but I fancy the proprietor is amply compensated for this by the increase of his monthly revenue. No. 10 on the opposite side, once one of Mrs. Walter's boarding houses,

has recently been altered and much improved, and is, I believe, let out in suites. Further down on the south side two new houses have been built in the compound of old No. 4; I cannot say that this is any improvement, and it has involved the sacrifice of one of the most attractive compounds in the street. This I fear, as time progresses, will be the fate of many of the compounds that now adorn this part of the city.

Harington Street.

I well recollect in the far-off days what was then called 2, Harington Street, next to Kumar Arun Chundra Singha's house. It consisted of an old-fashioned, long, straggling two-storeyed building, situated in the centre of a large, ill-kempt compound. It was run as a boarding house, together with several other establishments of a similar kind, by a lady of the name of Mrs. Box, who was well known at that time, and who held the same sort of position in Calcutta as did Mrs. Monk at a later period. She had the reputation of being very wealthy, and her old khansamah I know had also done himself very well, as when he retired he set up as a ticca gharri proprietor just at the junction of Camac Street and Theatre Road, and was one of the first to introduce into Calcutta the "Fitton" gharri. Many of the present generation must recollect seeing the patriaichal looking gentleman with a long

Chowringhee Mansions, built on the site of Old United Service Club.

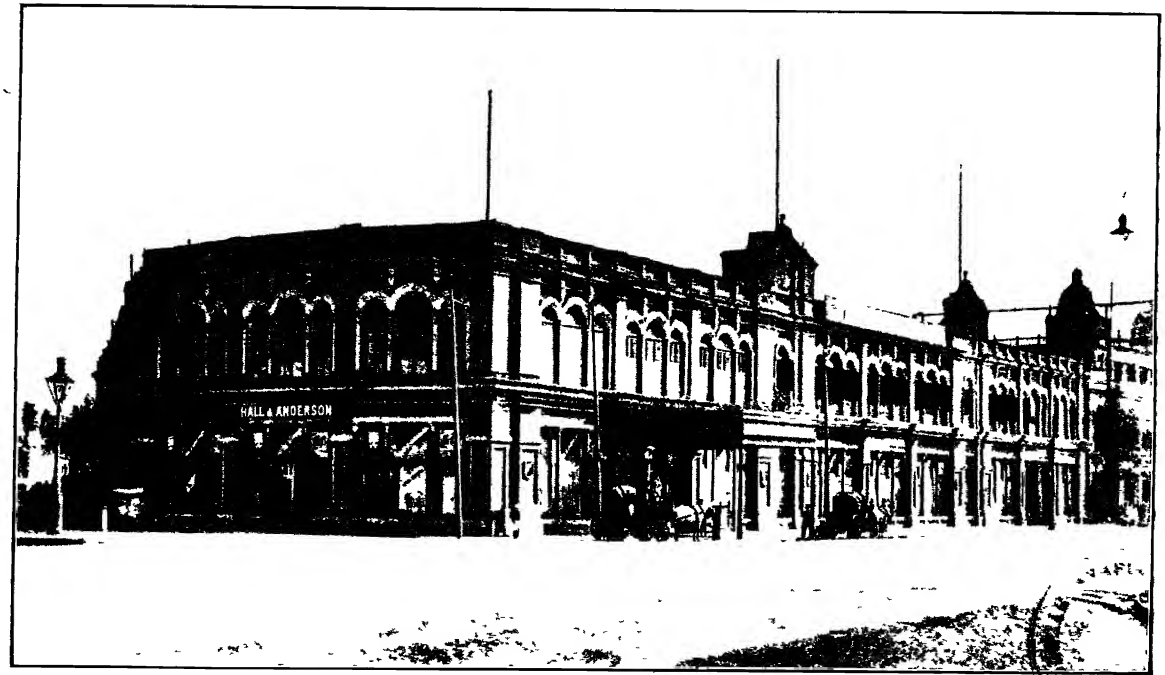


Photo. by] Hall & Anderson's premises, at the corner of Park Street *[Johnston & Hoffmann*

flowing white beard, perched on a charpoy every day just outside his stables. He did remarkably well at his new occupation, as he was able to build the two houses 39 and 40, Theatre Road. Returning to Harington Street, I may mention that the houses Nos. 2, 2/1, and 2/2, besides 8, Little Russell Street, were all built in the compound of the old house referred to as No. 2. Going further down to the end of the street on the left-hand side we arrive at what used to be No. 8, a very old and popular boarding house, for many years in the occupation of Mrs. Monk, upon which has been erected by Mr. Galstaun what is called the Harington Mansions, and on the opposite side the very handsome house owned and occupied by Sir Rajendra Nath Mookerjee, both of which were designed by my old lamented friend Ted Thornton; there are thirty flats in the Mansions, and I fancy they are always fully occupied.

Theatre Road.

No. 1 was, at one time, occupied by Sir Richard Markby, Judge of the High Court, during part of his stay in Calcutta, at another by a chummery consisting of Jim Henderson, Keith Douglas and Charles Brock, and afterwards it was let out as a boarding house to various people.

The present Royal Calcutta Turf Club premises were in the occupation for a consider-

able period of Sir Richard Garth, Chief Justice of Bengal, father of the present Sir William Garth, and he and Lady Garth were great favourites and very popular in Calcutta society. They used to entertain a good deal and give a ball once every season. Very pleasant affairs they always were. I recollect on one occasion I had engaged one of the Misses Searle previously alluded to for a valse, and when I went to claim it I found her seated on the verandah in conversation with Sir Richard, who, when I announced my errand, at once chipped in and said that I must have made some mistake as it was undoubtedly his dance, and nothing I could say would convince him to the contrary. The fact was he was having a good time and did not wish to be disturbed, so recognising the position I complacently retired. I may incidentally mention that Sir Richard was a well-known, ardent devotee of the fair sex. When he retired he wrote a pamphlet called "A Few Plain Truths about India." It caused a great sensation at the time, but is now quite unobtainable. A secondhand copy would be interesting not only for its material but for the price it would fetch.

As we proceed down the road, we come to No. 5 on the south side, which, from time immemorial, has had an undefinable, sinister, and uncanny reputation. What it is no one can

Photo. by

Old Bengal Club

[*Johnston & Hoffmann*

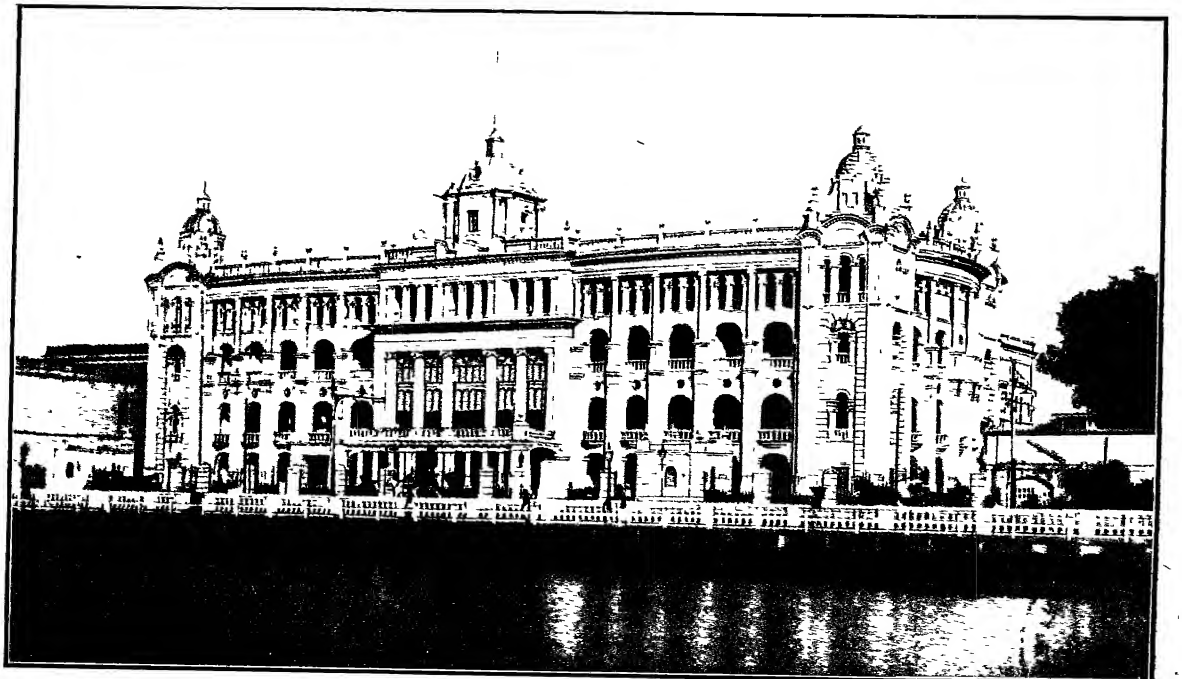


Photo. by] New Bengal Club. *[Bourne & Shepherd*

exactly say, but it is sufficiently significant to keep people from occupying it. At one time it seemed as if the owners were going to allow it gradually to tumble to pieces, but this year they have apparently awakened up and have built an entirely new facade and enlarged it on a considerable scale, which must have entailed a very heavy outlay, but so far unfortunately to no purpose. If all I hear is correct it has already been let twice, but the would-be tenants cannot get a single servant to venture near the place, so how it will all end remains to be seen.

From this point onwards to Camac Street, embracing Pretoria Street and all the houses round about comprised within the vast block extending from Theatre Road to Circular Road, the ground was formerly bustee land with the usual insanitary tank in the centre. It can therefore easily be perceived how greatly this section of the city has been transformed and improved. On the opposite side of the road the houses from No. 44 to Smith, Stanistreet & Co., and extending round the corner into Camac Street including No. 4/1, are also built on reclaimed bustee land. Nos. 45, 46, and 47 on the same side, higher up, are built on what was, at one time, part of the compound of 5, Harington Street, owned and occupied by Mr. George McNan, the boundary wall of which formerly extended to Theatre Road. Further

down on the south side we come to No. 15, in the occupation of the Rajah of Hutwa, at one time in the dim past the Young Ladies' Institute of Calcutta, and at a much later period one of Mrs. Monk's numerous boarding houses, presided over for some time by old Daddy Cartwright as a sort of chummery.

Further on we come to Rawdon Street; the houses to the north facing the burial ground as far as Park Street, including those in Short and Robinson Street at the east end adjoining, are also built on waste and reclaimed bustee land as well as those of red brick Nos. 29, 30, 31, and 32 in Theatre Road on the left-hand side after passing Rawdon Street. On returning to Little Russell Street we find many and various additions. In the old days there were only three houses numbered 1, 2, 3. No. 1 was demolished in the far-off time, and the present Nos. 5 and 6 were built on its site. No. 4 was then No. 2, No. 8 is built as already stated on the grounds of old 2, Harington Street, and No. 1 and No. 2 in the compound of the old No. 3, which latter house has been greatly enlarged and improved, and was once known as the Officers' Hospital.

At the south-east corner of Theatre Road and Loudon Street there used to be a tank, which was filled up many years ago and converted into quite a pretty garden which has been named Macpherson Square.

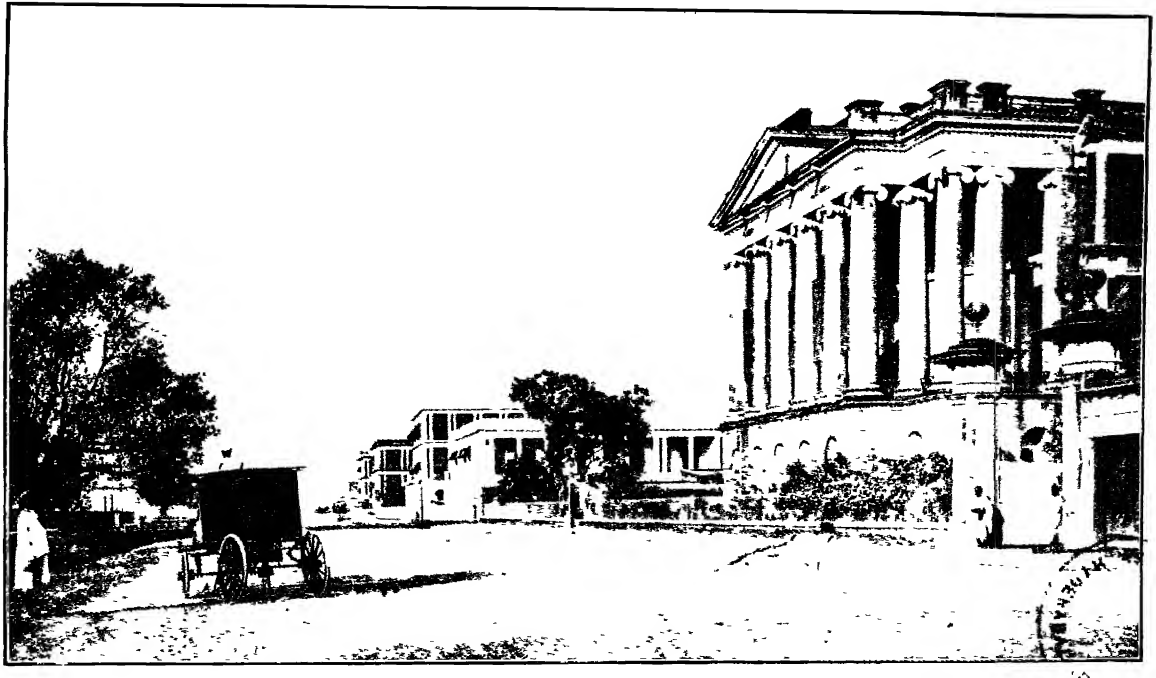


Photo. by] **Bishop's Palace, Chowringhee** *[Johnston & Hoffmann.*

Circular Road.

I well recollect the time when it was considered rather *infra dig* to reside in this particular part of the town, but then, of course, it was an entirely different place from what it has since become. Lee Road, for instance, was not then in existence, and for a very long time after it was opened contained but one house, No. 1, at present in the occupation of Mr. Goodman. On the south side of Circular Road immense alterations and improvements have been inaugurated, old bustee lands have been reclaimed, on which handsome residences have been erected, new roads and thoroughfares have been opened out and built upon, and Lansdowne Road, formerly known as Peepal Puttee Rasta, has also been widened, improved, and extended almost beyond recognition. In addition an entirely new street at the extreme end of the road has been created in Lower Rawdon Street.

This, I think, brings our perambulations to an end, and I can only express the hope that I have not wearied out the patience of those of my readers who have taken the trouble to accompany me on my travels.

In concluding these reminiscences and bidding farewell to my readers, I would crave their indulgence for the imperfections of which I am only too sensible there are many:

but at the same time I hope they will not forget that they are written entirely from memory, without any memoranda or data to refer to.